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A Note On Style

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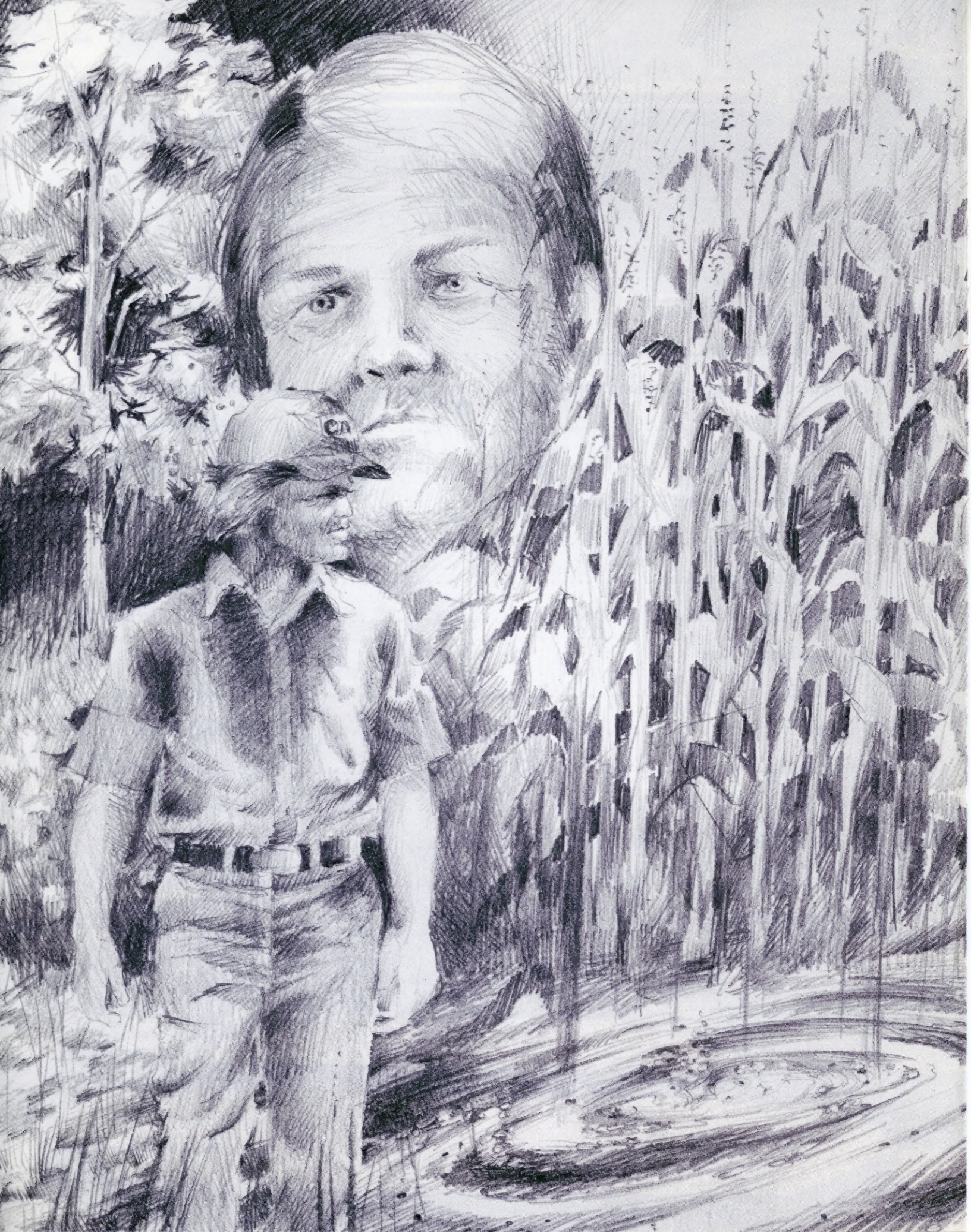
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The Chance

by Fred Donovan Hill

I was walking down a path by a field of green corn when I saw it. It was a head floating in the air, about cornstalk high. Just a head. No body. It was, of course, amazing. Yet somehow it was not especially horrifying. It was not like the head of the Green Giant that Gawain and the others gaped at. It was a balanced, unbloody, medium-sized, and moderately handsome, apparently-human head. It had thin, well-shaped lips, an aquiline nose, and sparse brown eyebrows and hair. It could have been another Southerner I'd met in a corn field if it had had a trunk and arms and legs and feet to walk on by me with. Instead, it hovered quietly by the path and then spoke.

"Don't be frightened. I don't mean you any harm."

"Good," I said.

"You are, of course, surprised?"

"Yes. What are you doing here?"

"We usually try to approach a person in a quiet, pleasant place like this. When he or she is alone—but in the open daylight. We find him or her more receptive in such a setting."

"I'm not the first, then?"

"Oh, no, we've given others the chance you're going to have."

"What *chance* is that?"

"A chance to enter the future."

"I should have thought that is what we are doing anyway—at each moment."

"You are a philosopher. Good."

"You *like* philosophers?"

"Yes, we like a person who is curious, open to adventure, and concerned about the future."

"I'm not sure I'm 'open to adventure.' It depends."

"You seem a likely prospect for what we have to offer."

"All right. But, again, why?"

"Do you believe in anything with the same strength and certainty that you believe you are standing here talking to me?"

"I don't believe in anything as strongly as I believe I'm standing here, but...."

"That's good enough. Come with me, please."

The head started moving down one of the rows of corn and soon we were deep among the flapping green tassels and far into the field. As the head moved I could see even in the sunlight and more so in the shadows of the tall corn that it emitted a soft, quick flash of light on and off again like a firefly. I had to run to keep up with the head and it occurred to me that perhaps it flashed on and off to make certain I continued to see it. Soon my khaki shirt and pants were clinging to me from my sweat and my heavy work boots clumped against the hard ground. The head had no body to hold it back. I would have called to it to slow down, but I was ashamed.

We came to a small spot of uncultivated land. Hidden like the baby Moses, a circular machine no more than five feet in

diameter lay among tall, thick weeds.

"We always land in a spot like this," the head explained. "We have no wish to damage crops—or to alarm anyone."

There were in the machine five transparent compartments, two empty, three containing heads similar to the one that had led me there.

"Is there another of you out on an errand?" I asked.

"No, the empty compartment is for you—if you choose to come with us."

"It appears rather small for me."

"We can take care of that."

"Here?"

"Yes."

I began to feel a little sick. I started to spin around and run back through the cornfield. But fascination was still stronger than fear.

"What would happen to my body?" I asked.

"Let's just say you would be placed here and now into a transcendent state. The body—your body—would no longer be needed. We offer you an exalted life: purely mental, spiritual, and aesthetic, beyond all bodily passions and pains. We offer you serenity in a vastness. Serenity in eternity."

I looked down at the two-feet-wide compartment and pondered "serenity in a vastness. Serenity in eternity."

"Try to overcome your natural squeamishness," the head began again. "Project yourself beyond your mortal, physical condition. Don't let it master you. In a moment—with your consent—you can be beyond such concerns forever. You can be the future."

I blinked hard and mumbled something incomprehensible, unremembered.

Again the head sought to persuade me: "Think of it this way. We offer you the peace and transcendence promised for centuries here on earth by all the great religions. We can give you something like Beatitude or Nirvana or Satori but without all the personal strain and dismal renunciation required by the religions which hold out those ideals of being."

My mind clicked through a turnstile into its past. "Is it because I was once involved in Vedantic and then in Catholic mysticism? Is that a reason you've chosen me for this offer?" I asked the head.

"That is one reason," it said.

"Then you do research your subjects before approaching them? Before giving them this *chance*?"

"Oh, yes."

"I'm afraid you concentrated too much on my early life. I was not quite twenty when I was—as they say now—'into' Vedanta and studying St. John of the Cross and contemplating the far reaches of the 'perennial philosophy.' I've slid a long way from those early efforts to reach a kind of purity. I'm as common now as the soil you see here," I said, looking down at the red-

Illustration by Danny Coker

gold earth in the beginning sunset. "I'm as rooted in this earth as the corn growing here."

"We can fix that," the head countered. "Once a person has shown a serious inclination towards transcendence, we can take care of the rest."

"By eliminating the body?"

"Yes."

"By lifting him beyond this world and its concerns."

"Yes."

"By transporting him above the merely but fully human?"

"Correct. By *deincarnation*."

"*Deincarnation*?"

"Yes. It's easy. And you will find it so."

I looked up at a nearby hillside. There was the plum orchard where Daisy and I had once walked, where we sat and talked and sang, and ate and drank, and even made love on a red quilt there under the plum trees. I suddenly re-experienced the whole thing: the hot earth beneath us felt through the quilt, the sweet but acrid odor of bursted plums all over the ground, the sweet yielding of her flesh, the tiny drops of sweat at the edge of her auburn hair, the green leaves flying against a deep blue sky that seemed to be melting over us....

"I've decided I can't go with you," I surprised myself by saying.

"But why?" the head asked.

"There are some things I can't explain to you—because you don't have a body," I said, feeling rather ridiculous.

"Please try."

"It's just that . . . well, I appreciate this chance you've given me. I don't disdain the kind of experience and knowledge you've offered. I want to know more about it. But I must try to know those things—if at all—as a fully *human* being, from some kind of wholeness, even out of my own sinfulness."

"Sin is an archaic conception for us."

"It will never be for us," I said.

"But what is really holding you here? Your wife is dead. You have no children."

"True. But I still have a duty to myself. To my *self* as I believe God made it. I have to follow out that divine destiny—not trade it for some artificial solution like yours."

"You will continue then to suffer much."

"Yes, and to enjoy much. Both out of my own being."

"From the standpoint of the future, you are a fool. I say this simply as a matter of fact."

"Yes, but perhaps your future is not forever. I believe I shall be ultimately right."

"Then goodbye to you. You will get no further chance."

"Good. And goodbye to you."

One of the empty compartments flew open and the head entered it. Without noise, and without any visible means of propulsion, the machine rose quickly and ascended with great speed. It went up through the darkening ribs of the sunset. Leaving the world's body, too, I thought. I stood and watched the machine rise until it was out of sight. Then I stood there quietly for several minutes more, rooted and growing with the corn.

unrose and lilyless

cornerless
i sit sighting
the lifeless
(boxed and glittered)
shuffling
in undance habitual.

lamprey-like,
they lipless suck
pre-fab confidence
from a can
to mingle,
sharing uncared barren
and volleying non-talk wordless.

sexless
they tumble into unlove
sticky,
stroking with untouch certain
and breeding sterility.

my heart beats:
"datta, datta, datta."

Ken Taylor

COTTON

I put down the large glass,
the ice clacking against its bottom,
and suddenly I was sitting in a field
drinking ice-cold water from a Mason jar.
I could smell the piles of cotton around me
and hear the black faces humming
and see the black hands stripping
the bolls of their whiteness
and stuffing it into sacks
they drug like growing trains behind them.
The sun was streaming through boyish hair
under a split straw hat
and shooting rivers of sweat
down my face and neck.
Then I could hear the scales
clinking against the truck
and we were all getting ready
to have our day's work weighed.
Everyone was laughing, joking,
and feeling free.
Or so I thought:
I knew so little of oppression then.

Fred Donovan Hill



Special Smut Section

The Circle presents the first segment of a three-part series on vice and commercial sex in the surrounding area. Mala Paulk starts it off with a story about Phenix City's infamous heyday, Pat O'Connor investigates 'adult bookstores' and mini-movies, and Rick Harmon details the history of pornographic film.

Coming this fall: prostitution, strip joints, and more.



'The Wickedest City In America'

by Mala Paulk

There is a tarnished spot on the halo which the Fonz and the rest of the "bee-bop" gang has managed to hang around the 1950's. The spot was blackened by corruption and crime and nurtured by apathy and deceit until all of America knew of her contaminated existence. Amid a string of pawn shops, along the banks of the Chattahoochee River, the blemish existed--Phenix City, Alabama. She was a blemish earning titles such as "the wickedest city in America" and a "twentieth century Sodam and Gomorrah" and from her questionable activities she shook the foundations of Alabama state government.

Like the alluring beauty of a copperhead rattler whose venomous bit afflicts the too curious, large amounts of trouble were readily purchasable in Phenix City at relatively small prices. No where else but Phenix City could one find whorehouses, honky tonks, gambling joints, and night clubs--literally every type of organized crime and corruption imaginable and then see a police department, a court house, and a city hall pleading total ignorance to the situation. Nowhere else but Phenix City could one see dead bodies with cement encased shoes dumped into the Chattahoochee River, unconsumed beer rebottled and resold, and luckless soldiers stripped of every nickel at a crooked blackjack table sent to a neighboring pawnshop to hock their underwear only to return to

the tables to lose again. An estimated \$2,000,000 monthly was soaked from the military establishment, Ft. Benning, in nearby Columbus, Georgia, during the booming Phenix City years. In nearby Auburn, concerned students were amazed at the uninterrupted activity in the adjacent county and many, particularly male students, out of curiosity, out of peer pressure, often visited spots such as Ma Beachie's Swing Club. One alumnus related how he and his girlfriend, straining to see the floor show up front, heard a voice from behind them offering to climb on a table to obtain a better view. Turning around, the startled couple were surprised to see the girl's dorm mother.

The "good times" synonymous with Phenix City were chiefly in two areas: sex and gambling. The going price for private female entertainment was ten dollars with one additional dollar charged for each extra minute. Usually, a girl's earnings were divided equally with the bordello for which she worked. According to records later tabulated, approximately one thousand prostitutes hustled the streets of Phenix City between 1945 and 1954.

One of the most heralded prostitution contact houses was Ma Beachie's Swing Club, frequented mostly by soldiers and Auburn students. Ma's almost always featured several talented strippers, singers, dancers, and an occasional has-been entertainer, earning the establishment the title of "best floor show in town." The spot was away from the honky-tonk strip in downtown

Phenix City, back on a dirt road near some residences.

Cliff's Fish Camp, another well-known spot, reportedly served as both restaurant and whorehouse to visitors of Russell County. Cliff's housed about twenty-four girls at one time, but during emergency rush situations, mattresses were placed atop tables and extra girls were booked to accomodate the overflow of patrons. The workers at Cliff's were often married women with families whose husbands dropped them off at night before they went to work in the mills and factories.

The Little Uchee, Hill Top House, The Social Club, the Georgia-Alabama Game Club, The 431 Club, and French Casino were only a few of the brazen centers of sexual entertainment available, a fact that was as well known to the public as the city in which they were located.

While not always prostitutes, "bar girls" or "B-girls" as they were more commonly called, were another type of parasite sapping serviceman, student or visitor's resources. Working in alliance with bartenders, the B-girl persuaded honky tonk patrons to buy her a drink. A B-girl's duty was to get her prey as drunk as possible and then to clip his money, often making false promises of later sexual favors or special shows after closing for special prices. Occasionally knock-out drops were administered in drinks to speed the rolling process. Hundreds of B-girls were centered in Phenix City, speaking to one another in a kind of pig Latin secret code and often tat-

toed by a hunchback named The Blue Bonnet. Life as a B-girl often directly led to a life as a prostitute, and the sexual promiscuity that marked Phenix City led to illegal abortion houses, and black market babies sold for elevated prices.

The gambling spots, although more expensive, were almost equaled in popularity with the sex market in Phenix City. But to actually call the numerous casinos and slot machines 'gambling' would be a misnomer, especially considering the city hosted her own loaded dice and marked card manufacturing place on Long Street. Hoyt Sheperd and Jimmy Matthews were considered the "Godfathers" of the racketeer world of Phenix City, and many of the casinos were owned by the pair. To accomodate soldiers in need of quick cash, dozens of pawn shops lined the bridge and street leading into the city. As many remember, hundreds of pairs of boots could be seen lining the walls of these stores, hocked by eager soldiers ready for a good time.

The most well-known gambling club in the area, known to wagers in New York, Boston, and Miami was the Bama Club, owned by Sheperd and Matthews. Stakes there were high and reservations were often a necessity to assure an opportunity to participate in the club's blackjack, poker, sports parlays and lotteries. Gambling spots dotted all of Phenix City, but were concentrated heavily along Dillingham and Fourteenth Streets. Here places such as 514 Club, Curt's Cafe', Manhattan Club and Yarbrough's Cafe' failed to offer the same fair games of chance which the Bama Club provided.

The crude corruption of the Phenix City of that time did arouse the anger and resentment of one specific group of people, the Russell County Betterment Association. This group, composed of concerned citizens from Rus-

sell County and neighboring Lee and Muscogee Counties used their knowledge of the people and places that ran Phenix City as undercover tactics in discovering racketeer plans and operations. One particularly outstanding member of the RBA was Albert Patterson, an attorney from Phenix City. Patterson had often been sighted as a man who straddled the fence post between good and evil, a man who had previously defended members of the underworld such as Godwin Davis and Hoyt Shepherd. Beginning at an Etowah County Schoolhouse, he announced to the state of Alabama that he had come 'to the Court of Last Resort'--he was ready, if elected state attorney general, to expose and clean-up the corruption that existed in Phenix City.



Albert Patterson

Racketeers, seeing their neon-lighted playground about to dissolve, quickly moved into action, donating approximately \$22,600 to Patterson's opponent, Lee Porter of Gadsden. Then, when it became apparent that monetary sums would be insufficient in halting

Patterson's campaign, an election fraud in Jefferson County was staged. The "fixers" added 600 votes to the tally. This, however, was an underestimation and Patterson defeated Porter by a narrow margin. Later, those involved in the fraud justified their actions by saying that Patterson himself had been involved in a similar election fraud years earlier and would therefore never dare question election returns. Despite underworld beliefs, an investigation into the election was launched, and several prominent figures were subpoenaed to testify, among them Russell County Circuit Solicitor, Arch Ferrell, and state Attorney General Si Garrett, and Albert Patterson. Two days before Patterson was to testify before the Grand Jury, he was assassinated in the alley as he attempted to enter his parked car near his law office.

Patterson's law office was located in the downtown section of Phenix City on Fourteenth Street near the Courthouse, the majority of gambling casinos and night clubs, a movie house, the Palace Theater, Smitty's Grill, and other shops. Three shots rang out at about 9:00 that June night--one shattering the attorney's vocal cords and two lodging in his chest. For the first time since receiving his WWI injury, Patterson walked without the aid of his cane, stumbling from the alley to the sidewalk with bloodied face and shirt, motioning to stunned bystanders.

Jimmy Sanders, a University of Georgia student, was the first to reach the prominent politician, now sprawled upon the sidewalk. "Who did this to you, Mr. Patterson?" he asked. Patterson, speechless due to his wounded throat, could only point to his chest before he died. Dozens of spectators then poured onto the street damaging and destroying important clues before investigators could arrive.

The morning after the shooting,
photo by Jeff Young

under orders by Alabama Governor Gordon Persons, Phenix City was placed under martial law. Urged by demands of Patterson's supporters throughout the state, an intense search was launched and investigators began to piece together motives for the shooting.

Si Garrett, State Attorney General, although having stated in a press conference that he had headed Patterson's opposition, offered to take charge of the investigation into the murder. Five days later he was committed to a mental hospital in Galveston, Texas, and treated for what doctors diagnosed manic depressive-ness. Yet, Garrett did not leave before first supplying County Solicitor, Arch Ferrell with an alibi, saying that they had been talking long distance together at the time of the murder. Then a report was supplied but never denied that Garrett had been given Ferrell's gun. Investigators found Garrett to be an excellent suspect in Patterson's murder.

Equally suspected in Patterson's murder plot was Phenix City lawyer Arch Ferrell. Although having once worked in cooperation in the defense of racketeer figures, Patterson and Ferrell were known enemies. Ferrell, known as one of the state's more brilliant young lawyers had obviously larger political aspirations and Patterson's promised disclosures as to the sources of the corruption of Russell County allegedly threatened those plans. At a news conference after the murder, Ferrell told an Associated Press reporter, "Albert Patterson is a no-good son-of-a-bitch and I'm glad he's dead."

Albert Fuller, "a quick-on-the-trigger" Russell County Deputy Sheriff, was the third of the chief suspects in the murder scheme. Already convicted of taking large pay-offs in allowing bawdy houses such as Cliff's Fish Camp to operate, Fuller was known to openly fratimize with the underworld. He was noted for his large

cowboy hat pushed far back on his head, for his love of guns (some people estimated he owned at least 30) and his tendency to flash large sums of cash.

Witnesses were gathered from as far away as North Carolina and New Mexico, and Ferrell, Fuller and Garrett were indicted. Garrett, due to his illness, was unable to stand trial. The site of the trial was moved from Phenix City to Birmingham to assure the most unbiased jury possible. The prosecution was led by Cecil Deason and assisted by McDonald Gallion and Bernard Sykes, both former aides in Garrett's D.A. office. After some period of debate, Albert Fuller was voted to stand trial first.

Narrowed from 547 names, Fuller's jury ranged from grocery store manager to plant supervisor to chemist. Reports from policemen and other investigators told of finding a clear set of footprints near Patterson's car the night of the murder. After telling Albert Fuller, who was participating in the investigation, they noticed that the evidence had been tampered with and was finally cover-

ed with boards.

Cecil Padgett and his wife related how they were coming from the Palace Theater, entering their car when they heard the shots and saw Fuller leaning against Patterson's car. A clean set of Fuller's handprints were obtained by investigators, but the defense stated that they were placed upon the car accidentally by Fuller who was trying to eject an overzealous newspaper reporter standing too near the victim's car trying to get a story. Later, through character witnesses for the Padgetts, the couple was alleged to have a poor reputation in the Columbus-Phenix City area, being heavily in debt. Padgett, upon the revelation of this fact, ran weeping from the witness stand stating that he had hoped, through his testimony, to receive a portion of the \$11,000 reward offered by Governor Gordon Persons for information leading to the conviction of Patterson's murderers.

Bill Littleton, who had been convicted of a manslaughter charge in a Phenix City honky tonk prior to Fuller's trial, testified in his prison garb that he had



The Scene of the Crime

photo by Jeff Hansard

seen Ferrell and Fuller in the vicinity of the murder just ten minutes prior to the shooting. Later, the defense attempted to falsify Littleton's testimony stating that he had only testified in order to receive an earlier parole from Kilby Prison.

The state's star witness, James Taylor, a Columbus taxi driver, fled to Niceville, Florida, before investigators apprehended him, stating that he "feared for his life." He testified that he was stopped at a red light with his drunken military passenger near the scene of the slaying. He saw Fuller, whom he said he had known for years, drive through the intersection wrecklessly after the shots were fired. Taylor then radioed back to his company that Albert Fuller had shot someone. The defense, although trying desperately, was unable to shake his testimony.

An autopsy on Patterson revealed that he was slain with two different bullet types, a "wad cutter" used in police schools for target practice and a "lubaloy" copper-cased bullet. Both types of bullets were found in Fuller's home in a box.

Russell County Courthouse custodian, Quinny Kelley said he had heard the shots and then had walked to the front of the courthouse where he said he had seen Arch Ferrell half running, half walking down the sidewalk, away from the murder scene.

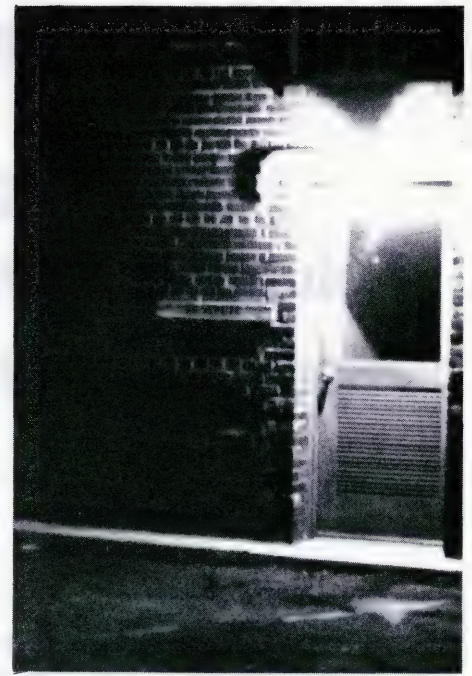
When Albert Fuller took the stand, he crossed himself three times. His alibis were obviously contrary to testimony and the

jury found him guilty as charged, sentencing him to life imprisonment. After serving part of his sentence Fuller was finally paroled and his whereabouts today are unknown.

The likeable Arch Ferrell fared better than his friend Fuller. After being acquitted of vote fraud charges, he was also acquitted of the murder of Albert Patterson, although much the same witnesses and evidence were used in his trial. Ferrell lost his law license after the Phenix City cleanup, and he supported himself for years as a traveling salesman for a car oil company. Approximately five years ago he regained his law license and is presently practicing law with his brother in Phenix City. When asked to talk about the Phenix City of yesterday, Ferrell chuckled good naturedly and drawled, "I'm all for what ya' doin', good luck and all of that, but there are just a whole bunch of reasons why I can't talk about all of that."

After the five week stay of National Guard troops in Phenix City, life was a turnabout. Many prostitutes and B-girls made pilgrimages across the bridge to Columbus and many left behind them their age old professions for more accepted lines of work. Racketeers fought their disintegrating world with threats and fears, and many were convicted of their underworld activities.

A statue commemorating Albert Patterson's struggle to overcome the evil that was Phenix City decorates the Alabama Capitol grounds and within the musty



basement of the State Archives and History Building in Montgomery, among old clippings and clutter, sits a cardboard box stuffed with the blood stained clothes of the possibly gallant lawyer who may have really hoped to make Alabama a better place in which to live.

Today the old Phenix City "hot spots" are renovated stores and warehouses and used car lots. But if the imaginative passer-by stops and strains, he can still hear the blaring music and the B-girls' laugh and the click of the roulette wheel of a Phenix City once like a late, late movie, a Phenix City now altered but not forgotten.



You Can't Judge a Bookstore By Its Cover?

Circle reporter Pat O'Connor went to Columbus looking for illicit massage parlors. Along the way he found something else.

by Pat O'Connor

Massage parlors are illegal in Columbus, Ga., and Phenix City, Ala. That is what the law proclaims and that is, on the surface, what is enforced in those two cities. However, explicit pictures and movies are not illegal in Columbus and the city boasts four outlets for printed and filmed sex for area citizens. And in a region that supports a large military base (Fort Benning) the stream of customers and cash that flows through those outlets is substantial. Suprisingly, maybe, these bookstores and movie houses serve more than the advertised purposes of distributing literature and showing films. Sex acts, rendezvous, arrangements, and pickups occur frequently in the bookstore areas, according to some of the people who work there.

The Southern News bookstore and adult mini-movie house stands on the strip of Highway 280 that flows into Fort Benning from Phenix City. The strip is flanked by a myriad of used car lots, and almost directly across the six-lane highway from the Southern News a huge Dolly Madison bakery covers an entire city block. The News is a rectangular one-story, dull gray-brown building that sinks into a trashy roadside. A plethora of gaudy signs advertise the functions of the building. "Adult peep shows," one sign proclaims. "No one under 18 admitted" a hand-written sign in the glass door reads. Another hand-printed poster informs prospective customers that the establishment will now be open for business on Sundays from 12 to 5.

Directly inside the door stands a counter and cash register where the only employee on duty idly passes the time. The walls of the room are covered with newstands filled with pornographic (emphasis on graphic) magazines. One wall is devoted to homosexuality, one to sadomasochism, one to "straight" sex, and one to sex books. A rack of *Screw* magazines stands by the door. Beneath the glass-topped counter at the cash register, a variety of sex aids and stimulants are on display. To the right of the counter an open doorway leads to the blackness of about eight private booths, each equipped with a 25-cent peep show. When I entered the shabby store, a man of about 25 who claimed to be a former University of Alabama student, talked freely about the people who came there to purchase the merchandise or view the films. Unaccustomed to this type of atmosphere, I had invited fellow Auburn student Jerry Conner along, and he assisted in the questioning of the man running the shop.

He was a talkative fellow who did not give much attention to his appearance—his dark brown hair was greasy and his clothes ill-fitting. He seemed right at home in the gloomy atmosphere of the bookstore. At first he was wary of our questions, but a bit of casual conversation got him talking. "There are no massage parlors in Columbus or Phenix City," he said. We had just been informed by two locals at an off-brand gas station that a person could find massage parlors in the area, but they were underground. The porno seller at the News said he didn't know anything about them. "There used

to be one on the Eufaula highway, but it was just a front for a whorehouse and it got busted.

"I've been in one in Florida, they don't really know how to massage. Yes, they'd do anything I wanted, but not all of them are into that," he continued. He would not reveal his name, but he seemed genuinely proud to be able to tell someone about his job. "Some people around here have been talking about opening a massage parlor up. They need one here; it'd keep the soldiers off the streets." He said about half of his customers were soldiers from Fort Benning. He also said he figured about 60 percent of the customers to be gay.

"Several Auburn students and professors come in here," he informed us. "There might be others who go to Auburn and come here who don't talk to me. I know of four Auburn professors who come in here that are gay. One of them told me he has a wife and kids in Auburn and a lover outside of town."

During the time we were in the News about ten people, all males, black and white, entered and asked for change and went through the dark doorway to the peep shows. But the friendly employee said other activities besides movie-viewing went on in the darkness of the back room. "Several strange things happen here," he explained. "People leave messages for me to give to other people, people ask me to set them up and some even approach me, male and female. One lady whose husband is an officer at Fort Benning cruises the parking lot every morning and starts talking to someone who stops then takes him home

with her then brings him back."

He said he had never been forced to ask anyone to leave because of boisterous behavior, but on one occasion maybe should have. "This guy came in and asked me to tie him up. I told him no but that night when I was closing up I found him tied up in the back. I took off his gag and he asked me to beat him before I untied him. I started to leave him tied up."

The young man said he began working in the bookstore because he knew the manager, and he had been working for about three years. "This store is owned by a nationwide chain and it makes a good profit," he reported. He had no qualms over speaking about my subject, but he said he was not supposed to be talking to us, that it might get him in trouble.

Directly across from the News stands the Foxes Cinema, a ragged, peeling pink building with a sign that advertises explicit movies. The employee of the News said the people at the Foxes Cinema were not as friendly as he was, so we did not go across the street.

The other two adult stores in Columbus are in downtown area. The Den Mini-Theatre, housed in the old Arthur Murray Dance Studio building, is about 100 yards from the First Presbyterian Church of Columbus and directly across the street from the beautiful white First National Bank building, which was decked out in full red, white, and blue regalia in honor of Columbus's sesquicentennial the day we were there. The Pix is on the same street, closer to the Chattahoochee River. Though the Den advertises to be a bookstore, there are no books or magazines inside—only a full screen motion picture theatre, some mini-movies, and three pinball machines. A small lobby houses the pinball machines and the counter where the employee takes money from customers.

The counter person (we'll call him Frank) at the Den was a thin, greasy-haired man of about thirty. His upper lip was covered sparsely by a pencil-thin

mustache. Like the News' employee, he did not seem to worry about his appearance. He said he had just gotten out of the army and had come to Columbus from his home in Brooklyn, N.Y., because his father lived in Columbus. He said he worked at the Den because it was the only job he could find, and he had had experience running movie projectors. The Den has an unofficial bouncer, so he said, who stays with him most of the time. His alleged bouncer was a rather small young man, not more than 18, who spoke without the help of his front two teeth. As soon as we began talking with the man (who too was talkative) behind the counter, a short-haired youth walked over from the pinball machines and began telling us all about the massage parlors in the area. Frank gave him a look of exasperation and motioned for us not to pay attention to the youth, who said he was 17 years old. The sign on the front door of the Den proclaimed that no one under 18 would be admitted. Frank didn't seem to care about the youth's age, and he has no hesitation in telling us about his own experience.

"I went to a massage parlor in Greensboro, N.C., once. They named off the types of deals, like a business man's special, then I laid naked on a table. A girl come in and massaged me and we talked. I had to pay \$55 for the massage and for \$10 more, I got regular sex. She used creams and fancy massages. You could have a man or woman and they had orientals, blacks, and whites."

Frank said mostly men, black and white, frequent the Den. He said it also was owned by a chain, but he would not identify the organization. As we talked to Frank, the 17-year-old rambled on about massage parlors and himself. He claimed to have graduated from high school at 14 and said he was a part-time student at Auburn and that his father was a professor here. His name is not listed in the student directory, and the atmosphere in the Den was not that of intelligent

human beings but that of total resignation or uselessness.

Frank said he knew nothing of any massage parlors in the Columbus area, but added that he had not been there long. He seemed more sincere than the News' employee. But neither could be considered absolute authorities as far as telling the truth. The Den also had a few of the mini-film booths like the News. "People can meet in the booths, but they can't overdo it," Frank said.

The sex bookstores in Columbus, then, are somewhat mild substitutions for the absent massage parlors. The workers in the two stores that we visited obviously knew that extracurricular activities were occurring in the darkness of the movie booths, but apparently they did nothing to halt the activities. As a matter of fact, Frank said, "Policemen come in here." To check the legality? "No, to look around. One sometimes watches the mini-movies, but I don't know if he is on duty. He has on his uniform though." The job motivation of the bookstore employees seemed to be a lack of anything else to do. The two workers we spoke to were eager to tell about their jobs, and seemed to be rather enthusiastic about doing well at them.

I was glad to leave Columbus the day we visited the adult bookstores. But after the visit, rather than wanting to launch a crusade to outlaw them I felt a sense of pity for those who were trapped by the lure of rampant sex. The outlets serve a vaguely useful purpose, for without them, the frustrations and bottled-up feelings of some lonely or frustrated people might be directed in other, more violent directions. The News' employee said local detectives had questioned him in connection with the "stocking strangler" murders, on the hunch that the murderer might frequent such a store. Though Columbus has no massage parlors discernible along the streets the area does have pornographic bookstores which serve the same purpose, in more ways than one.



Sinema

by Rick Harmon

The chances are if an old man passed by a skinflick he might remark to anyone who would listen that "there weren't any movies like that when he was growing up, and even if there had been no one would have gone to see them." But the old man would have been wrong.

Skinflicks have been around and have been enjoyed almost as long as movies have been in existence.

There were erotic films being made less than two years after the first public showing of a motion picture in 1894. In fact one of the first famous film clips to catch America's fancy was a sexploitation film. At the 1893 World's Fair one could watch a scantily clad woman named Fatima do a dance which caused some of the fair's longest lines.

The first sexploitation film made for profit was "The Irwin-Rice Kiss," shown in 1896. The film was an excerpt from a play called "the Widow Jones" and was shown in numerous penny arcades. The picture was a close-up of the climax of the play, when the two stars May Irwin and John C. Rice held a prolonged kiss. Even though critics of the time called the film "bestly" and "absolutely disgusting," it became a huge success.

Although this film helped lead the way for sexuality in film, it had no nudity and could not really be considered a skinflick. That honor went to a French film, which came out less than a year later.

The film "Après le Bal-le Tub" was created by George Melies, a film genius and the father of the science fiction film. The film depicted little more than a girl, rather plump by today's stand-

ards, being bathed while standing in a tub, but that was enough to open the doors.

In the next few years, the practice of showing nudity through bathing sequences, which was mostly done by the French, and through the device of acting out ancient art classics, which was primarily done by the Italians, had begun to spread to the United States.

By 1905, there were thousands of legal nickelodeons and as many illegal ones dealing in skinflicks. But the film industry was outgrowing simple nudity and according to Lo Duca in his book *The History of Eroticism* the first pornographic stag film appeared in France in 1908.

As usual, when an opportunity to make money was seen, America did not lag behind for long. "The Grass Sandwich," a stag film made in America around 1915, features fairly explicit intercourse. It was just one of many such films to do so.

It should be pointed out however, that stag films were a separate industry from skinflicks and other sexploitation films made by early film directors. While the latter films were usually shown publicly in nickelodeons and arcades, the stag films, which showed much more explicit sex, were normally carried around and shown to small groups by itinerant showmen. While stag shows have always been sexually explicit, the sexual liberation of the regular film industry was a long gradual process.

By 1913 nations preparing for or in war, decided to crack down, and one of the first board of film censors compiled a list of what could and could not be shown. The list vetoed nude figures, any scene showing a drug habit, men and women lying in bed together and scenes showing profusive bleeding.

One man who fell victim to this early censorship was the famed movie mogul D.W. Griffith, who

revolutionized the movie industry with his blockbuster "Birth of a Nation." Griffith was told by distributors to spice up his movie "Intolerance." He attempted to do this by showing female nudity in an orgy scene, but the censors left the scenes on their cutting room floor.

But where D.W. Griffith failed a young director by the name of Cecil B. Demille succeeded. With the use of Biblical themes, which somehow allowed the censors to overlook scenes of nudity, and some movies which promised lasciviousness, but didn't deliver, Demille became one of the most successful directors in Hollywood.

The real censorship crackdown on films did not come about because the films were too risqué for movie viewers, but because the actors were.

A collection of Hollywood scandals left theatre goers outraged. Probably the scandal which had the most to do with the strict censorship crackdown was the Fatty Arbuckle incident. Arbuckle, who at one time was one of America's top comedians, had his career destroyed when he was charged with raping to death an actress by the name of Virginia Rapp. Although the jury found him not guilty, moviegoers pronounced sentence upon both Arbuckle and Hollywood.

The Arbuckle scandal combined with a number of others, including at least two stars, who had portrayed All-American youths dying of drugs, brought Will Hays and the strictest Censorship America has ever known.

The code banished the use of such words as "naked," "bum," "mistress," "prostitutes," and phrases such as "long, lonely nights," and even "twin beds."

Baxter Phillips in his book *the Unseen Cinema* says that the censors would not allow "more than four feet of film wherever the shoulder straps or hands were."

The new censorship killed the careers of some of Hollywood's most talented stars, including Erich Von Stroheim and Mae West. It was not until after World War Two with the coming of Neo-realism, that the film industry began to throw off its censorship and the skinflick was reborn.

Once again it was in Europe that nudity first emerged. In France and Italy nudity was allowed to be shown as part of the new realism. With films such as "Bitter Rice" and "Stromboli" the Italians began to set a new trend toward liberalism.

At first America fought the move. During this period most foreign films had to be shot with alternate scenes, so that while nudity was shown in Europe, doctored, clothed versions were shown in the United States.

But soon the censorship in America began to erode, and with a landmark Supreme Court Decision on a nudist film called "The Garden of Eden," the skinflick reemerged for good.

"The Garden of Eden" was made in 1955. The film had no sex, no nudity below the waist showing the female or male sex organs and not much of a plot. The Supreme Court decision opened the doors to a multitude of nudist films in which, although partial nudity was accepted, sex was completely forbidden.

It was not even until 1966 that producer director John Lamb released "The Raw Ones," a nudist film which showed complete frontal nudity.

Although the Supreme Court decision on "The Garden of Eden" was a big step for the resurgence of skinflicks, the major breakthrough came about through the introduction of the nudie-cutie.

The founding father of the nudie-cutie was Russ Meyer who created it in 1959 with a film called "The Immoral Mr. Teas." Meyer spent only \$24,000 and four days to make the movie, but the film became one of the most notor-

iously erotic to be released in America until 1968.

The film was only 63 minutes long, but by combining nudity with a plot, it achieved something that nudest camp films had never been able to do--popularity.

Thus popularity allowed Meyer's film to break through into many of the movie houses, which had never before shown nudity or sex.

The huge financial success of the film caused a sexploitation gold rush. The combination of sex and humor spelled sure-fire box office. Only five years later, the nudie-cutie began to die out. Nudity was no longer enough for the American movie-goer. They wanted blood.

Characteristically, American censors have always tolerated violence more than they have sex, following what one critic calls the "better slay than lay" principle. While "Carnal Knowledge" has occasionally been banned, censors have expended little effort to censor "The Texas Chainsaw Massacre," or similar films. It was Russ Meyer who once again discovered a gold mine through taking advantage of this characteristic. This time he did it by combining nudity and violence.

Meyer produced a film called "Lorna," a hodgepodge of carefully balanced nudity, sex and violence, which centers its story around rape and murder.

Meyer's new style again caught on, but it was not tasteless violence that liberalized the use of hard-core sex scenes, it was tasteful and skillful artistry.

By 1966 a number of excellently-made "art films" had begun to make their way onto the American film market. Although many of these films contained soft-core porno, these products of film geniuses like Fellini and Bergman were so clearly works of art that many censors allowed them to be shown uncut.

At the same time that art films were giving legal precedent to

soft-core porno, censorship was being challenged from the opposite extreme of the film industry. Stag movies were finally moving out of the bedrooms and clubhouses into the theatres. The movement started in San Francisco with vulgar "Beaver films."

The "Beaver films" were cheap, crude one reel films, which normally consisted of no plot and no other action than a girl doing a strip-tease and finally showing her genitals. Soon however when audiences began to tire of just this action, film makers began to add simulated sex to the films.

One of the filmmakers who did the most to popularize the hard-core film was Alex DeRenzy. DeRenzy went far beyond even what the other San Francisco porno producers dared to show. This included such formerly taboo acts as showing actual sex, showing the female and male sex organs and showing sexual discharges.

By 1969 twenty-five San Francisco theatres were showing hard-core pornographic films. By 1970 the porno movies advertised as "San Francisco films" had spread to big cities all over the country.

About this time a movie entitled "Censorship in Denmark: A New Approach" became the first film that showed really hard-core sex to be reviewed by a major reviewer, when it was reviewed by *The New York Times* and *Variety*.

Shortly after major reviews had legitimized the stag film, a hybrid between the "art film" and the hard-core film caused a sensation in the movie industry. The movie was "I Am Curious-Yellow," and in 1969 the film became a landmark pornographic movie because of its legal victories and because of its huge popularity.

The Swedish import, which was primarily an art film, but contained some hard-core scenes, became one of the most attended pornographic films in history. It

also won most of the litigations that it was involved with, including a case which went before the federal court and upon which the Massachusetts authorities ruled that theatre owners could not be prosecuted for showing the film.

Hollywood was quick to see the profit potential of the film and take advantage of the new pornography rulings, which the film had brought about. Less than a year after "I Am Curious-Yellow," Hollywood began work on "Carnal Knowledge," which was banned in some parts of the south, and "Myra Breckinridge," which included an anal rape sequence.

These films were followed by the first really hard-core stag film to make tremendous profits at the box office. The film was "Deep Throat," which starred Linda Lovelace and Harry Reams. In 1972 it became one of the year's most successful films, although it possessed a crudity and explicit-

ness formerly associated with only stag films.

Other hard-core films have followed in the footsteps of "Deep Throat." Some of the more successful ones have been "Behind the Green Door," starring Marilyn Chambers, "Misty Bethoven," and "The Devil in Miss Jones."

Although at the moment there is an "anything goes" atmosphere as far as porno-film production, because of the last Supreme Court ruling on pornography, laws affecting the porno-film are vague and unclear. The community-standard ruling allows each local community to set up its own pornography laws. This means that the laws affecting pornography films often differ from city to city. Thus, while a city like Auburn may allow a fair amount of freedom as to what and how much sex may be shown in a movie, a city like Montgomery

may censor any scenes from films which they consider too hard-core, and a city like Opelika may not allow explicit films to be shown at all.

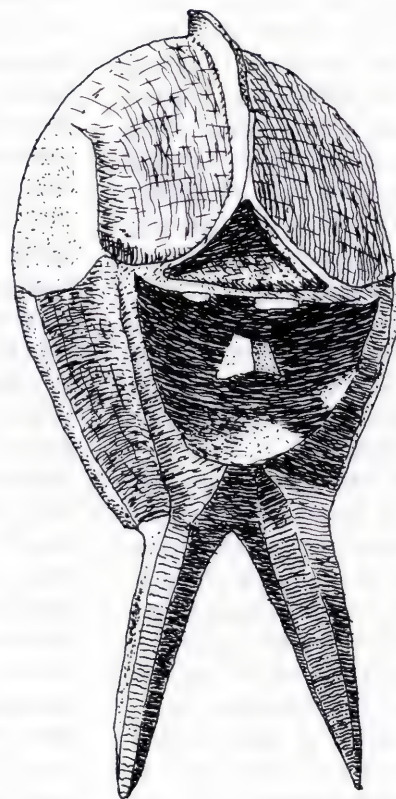
This variance of law from city to city has caused many problems to arise. The major one so far is the prosecution of directors and actors of porno movies by certain communities for making films that were perfectly legal in the communities where they were originally made.

Despite the legal hassles caused by the Supreme Court decision there has been no slowdown in porno-film production, and it is safe to predict that films will continue to go all the way with their explicitness as long as "the wages of sin" continue to be so profitable and to draw large audiences.

Anger

Bubbling and boiling my insides,
Hotter, Hotter, Hotter . . .
Till I can take no more,
Forming a vacuum in my brain
Until-
one
more
degree
of
pressure
and . . .
I explode!

Cynthia Monk



Bakwele Gon Mask

drawing by Lloyd Malone

A Slight Delay

by Jeanne Holland

The rain fell heavily that August noonday in the city--a sullen and dirty sort of rain that slickened the pavement and tangled the traffic without easing one degree of the oppressive heat. The young woman turned her head slowly from side to side and pursed her lips examining her appearance in the taxi driver's rearview mirror.

"You want under that awning, miss?"

"Yes, of course. I don't want to sludge through all this muck."

Just as she tipped the driver and strode across the lobby of the doctor's building, the thick drizzle gained force and the rain began to fall in sheets. Anne Hastings smiled to herself when several men and women scampered in off the streets. In all the rain and the heat and the mess, she stood out from the crowd as a picture of composure and coolness. Her dark brown hair was swept up and pinned in a tight chignon. Her green eyes were crisply accentuated with just the right touch of brown pencil. Her tan trench raincoat was immaculate. She carried a small, chic clutchbag. Anne recalled her words from that morning to the *Ms. Magazine* interviewer: "I'm sure you haven't met any woman as together as I am." Anne was going to be featured in an article entitled "Women on Their Way Up."

Anne buzzed the elevator and thought, "Shapiro and Adams are surely going to screw Unibanque with the costs of these mandatory physicals for executives. But the major medical package employers' Mutual offered us is just too good to pass up--complete dental and maternity benefits, limited coverage for relatives, hospitalization . . . damnit, where is that elevator?" Anne pressed the buzzer hard again. She was scheduled to meet with the Board at 1:30 to outline her proposals for Unibanque's recovering a measure of its Chilean investment that had been nationalized during the



Illustration by Jesse Evans

recent revolution.

As Anne punched the button for the third time, the elevator doors slid open and she stepped inside. Glancing up, she saw a bedraggled young man running towards the elevator, waving his arms for her to hold the doors. Anne quickly summed up his appearance, ". . . short, pudgy, sweaty, matted black hair." She did not make a move. He reached the elevator, jammed his arm between the closing doors and squeezed inside.

Anne could feel his eyes upon her. She disdained to return his look, focusing instead on the panel where the floor numbers blinked on and off. Seemingly intent on the progression of the lights, she lifted her head slightly. Anne knew that her profile, with its high cheekbones, was considered "splendid."

It was between the seventh and eighth floors that the whirr of the elevator machinery died away. The car slowed gently to a stop and all its inside lights flickered once, and then went out. Anne thought, "I don't believe it. This cannot be happening to me."

It's got to be 12:15 by now. Shapiro always keeps me waiting." Mentally, she ticked off, "I've got to be out of this place by one o'clock, get back to the office by 1:10, assemble the charts . . ." She could hear the man futilely pressing the elevator buttons. Anne stepped in front of him. She punched the buttons up and down the elevator panel and felt for some kind of emergency telephone. There was none.

"That's just fine!" she cried, "I have to get caught in this ancient metal crate! Well, this old thing probably sticks all the time." Then Anne remembered the thunderstorm outside. What if the electricity were off in the entire building? "You know," Anne mused aloud, "we could be stuck here for quite some time."

Inside the elevator the darkness was so deep that Anne could not even make out the form of her fellow passenger. She thought he was to the right of her but then felt his presence on her left. She spoke in that direction, a little too brightly, "Say, do you know anything about elevators? I mean, have you ever been stuck in one before?" "God, you sound insane!" she chided herself.

There was no response to her stilted attempt at friendliness. "Well," Anne thought, miffed, "I didn't leap to hold the doors open for him or return his burning gaze, so now he's insulted. Let him pout. Or maybe he's nervous about being in the elevator with me." Anne smiled at this last thought--"the poor, little man."

The darkness made the air seem thick and heavy. Anne began to perspire. She took off her raincoat, pushed back her sleeves, and adjusted her skirt. Several strands of hair were straggling from the chignon; Anne impatiently blew them out of her face. She took a step backwards, bumping into the man. Startled, she whirled away. In a voice that she could not keep entirely steady, Anne quavered, "We might as well get acquainted. I'm Anne Hastings, loan officer at Unibanque. I was Sarah Lawrence, class of '71. How about you?"

Again, there was no reply.

Breathing rapidly, Anne backed against a wall of the elevator. "Really I hope you didn't think I was rude when I couldn't catch the doors to this elevator. I--I was thinking about something else. You know how your mind sort of wanders away sometimes."

Silence.

"What is the matter with him?" Anne thought. Her breathing sounded unnaturally loud in the elevator. "Why doesn't he say something? My God, everything is so quiet. What is he thinking? What is he going to do?"

What is he going to do?

"Oh no . . . no, this isn't happening," Anne's mind raced. "He can't do anything to me. Where is he? I

can't even hear him breathe." She strained her eyes in the darkness. "I'll hide," she thought, "or at least try to."

Anne crouched in the farthest corner from the elevator panel where she thought the man was. She drew her knees against her tightly and laid her head upon them. She squeezed her eyes shut and tried to make her breathing imperceptible.

She mentally ordered herself, "Think of something pleasant, think of something nice . . . and stay calm!" As images of her childhood floated before her, Anne began to relax. She saw herself as nine years old, running beside the seashore at sunset. She remembered the Christmas when she got the blue bicycle and the times she rode her pony through the tall spring grass.

Then Anne recalled the birthday party, Carolee Brown's spend-the-night party when they were all seven years old. The tent was set up in the backyard with Carolee, Sally, Beth and Annie inside. Annie, in her Minnie Mouse sleeping bag, was closest to the back. Then Lenjy Monroe and that other awful knocked the tent down. Carolee and Beth ran out shrieking and giggling; Sally crawled out, laughing. But Annie in the back woke up suddenly with the darkness pressing in upon her, suffocating her. She couldn't breathe, could not! The darkness, its weight, was choking her.

Anne opened her eyes to impenetrable darkness. She was sobbing. Her underlip was raw where she had bitten it. She ran to the elevator door and slammed both of her fists against them with each cry, "Let me out! Let me out of here! Doesn't anyone hear me? Get me out!"

The man grabbed her arm.

Anne wrenched her arm free and stumbled on the raincoat she had dropped on the floor. Her hands were curled into claws. "Stay away from me!" she shrieked, "If you come near me I'll tear your eyes out! Stay Back! Stay away from me!"

All at once the engines of the elevator began to hum and the harsh fluorescent lights flashed back on. Anne slumped against the elevator wall. The man had his back to her; he was pressing one of the buttons. Anne closed her eyes and leaned her face against the cool, metal wall.

The elevator doors opened on the tenth floor, Anne's destination. The man stepped out. Anne stooped down, brushing her tangled hair out of her face and smearing the blood on her lips, to pick up her dirty raincoat. As she dragged herself towards Dr. Shapiro's office, she turned for a last look at the horrible man from the dark elevator. He was standing next to a therapist who was nodding and straining her eyes towards Anne. The man's hands and fingers flew in quick, deft, graceful motions. He was a deaf-mute.



Of Mick n' Bob and Rock n' Roll

by Dave White

Bob Welch likes to smoke cigars and wear weird, finger-width thick glasses made of diverse materials.

Welch's cigars come from Havana; his glasses come from the outer reaches of Exotica.

Other than the glasses and high-class cigars, Welch doesn't look the part of a macho rock 'n' roll superstar--something he isn't. Not one shred of leather and no hint of glitter adorns his body, and his back stage manner crosses into modesty and borders on shyness.

Mick Fleetwood likes to drink and wear funny-looking hats. He also wears an almost clown-like expression that looks like Marty Feldman would if he had his face elongated.

Clothes hang limply from his elongated frame, but the same long body allows his dangling arms to powerfully assail helpless drum sets with a whip-like action and intensity.

Welch wasn't too happy after his Auburn concert. He got on stage at 11:20 p.m.--late by any concert standards--and left an hour later, sans encore, despite a long, rousing standing ovation.

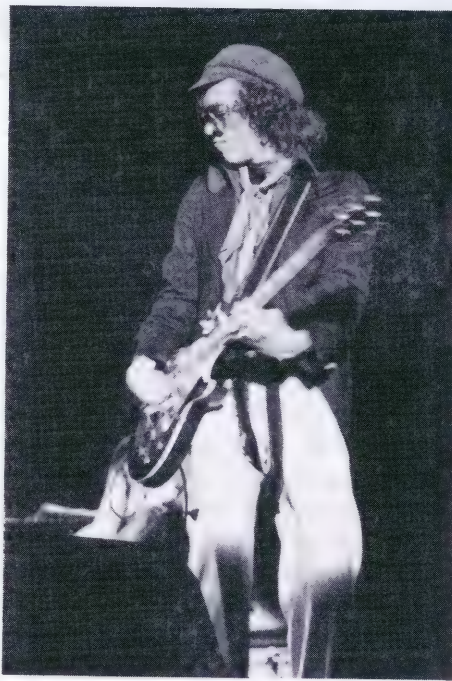
"It was really getting late and people were tired," was his brief explanation of his non-encore.

Welch's band manager was a little more articulate, stating that he'd never heard of a warm-up act (Robert Palmer) playing for 80 minutes so late at night before the headliner.

Fleetwood didn't really care about time that Friday night. All he cared about was jamming on guitar backstage with whoever

cared to play horrendous English-blues meanderings with him in a backstage room.

Fleetwood, with mind, body and soul focused on the cosmic sounds emanating from his electric guitar, would chant an occasional "Krishna, Krishna" that mingled in with the other primitive blues



sounds seeping out of a back Coliseum room.

More raucous sounds from acoustic guitar, table-pounding and chanting came courtesy of Welch's band members after the concert.

But Fleetwood wasn't above playing along. He reportedly had locked himself up in a bathroom, plugged in his guitar and jammed with himself before the concert too, making life very uncomfortable for a nervous Jon

Pousette-Dart, whose band opened the show May 19.

After peaceful pleading, more vigorous statements and turning the lights off several times, the band manager finally had to threaten Fleetwood and his blues brothers with bodily harm before they'd leave their enclave after the show and pile into cars going to the motel.

Welch didn't join in with his old Fleetwood Mac buddy on the blues croonings and random guitar forays. He showered, dried off, dressed and got ready to leave for what used to be the JoVonn Inn.

The roadies, some with working-class British accents even thicker than Fleetwood's, had a dandy time bumming around after the show and before the motel.

"Ay, Whot shoed I do wit this?" asked a shaggy-haired worker with crooked teeth. He was holding up a mike base while sipping on a beer.

After a quick response mentioning a "place where the sun never shines," the back hall erupted with a laughter that mingled well with the "Hare Krishna's."

Not a whole lot of laughs were heard when roadies talked about Robert Palmer. Welch's band manager claimed that Palmer's men wanted "the focus changed" for the concert; fixing the spotlights so Palmer's stage set up would show up best.

When Welch's men replied that top-billed acts get the focus, Palmer reportedly noted, "Well that'll make things pretty rough on you guys in Atlanta, won't it?"

Welch and Palmer were scheduled to switch roles the night after

Photo by Vickey Hunt

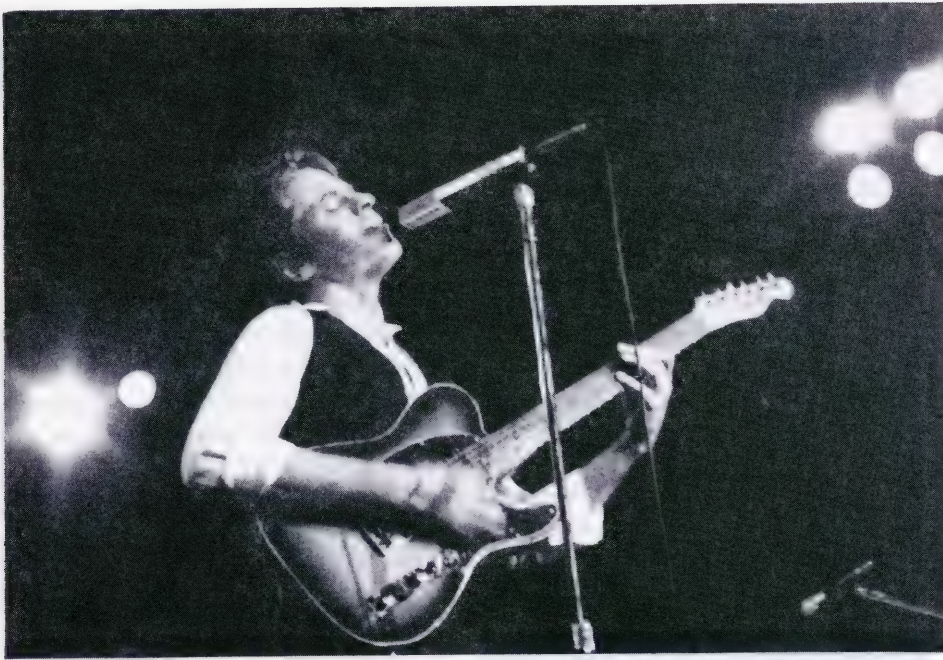


Photo by Vickey Hunt

the Auburn concert, with Welch playing lead-off act and Palmer taking top-billing at the Fox in Atlanta.

Welch didn't want to mess with the situation. Fleetwood wasn't into disputing things either. All he was into was bed the next morning about 10:30 a.m. Stashed away in his very own motel room, Fleetwood was dead to the world when the rest of the band and crew were ready to head off to Atlanta, via the Columbus airport.

The ever-patient band manager dialed a number and listened into the receiver quite a while . . . "Hey Mick, it's time to get up . . . yeah, get up . . . come on down to the lobby . . ."

After listening to an unbelieving silence and delayed click on the other end, an amused closet den mother acted out what must have been Fleetwood's reaction to his eviction notice.

Fleetwood had just staggered out of the bed and into a front seat for the auto trip to Columbus when an old black man drove up and parked in the motel parking lot. The old man drove a pick-up

truck. The pickup truck carried a mule. The mule carried a lot of years.

The band members carried on like pre-schoolers gawking at a real live lion for the first time. Their minds were blown. Here was an old, graying mule with missing teeth being carried around by this graying, smiling black man with missing teeth--at *their* motel--in 1978.

An illicit type cigarette started making the rounds in one of the cars. The musicians in another car struck up an animated conversation with the proud mule owner. Mouths dropped open. No after-gig party could ever offer more kick than this mule . . .

Car rides to the airport found musicians and roadies discussing musical equipment, rock groups and coliseums like businessmen must discuss contract, other companies and office buildings.

Steve Marriot likes to spit at his audience just to watch people scatter . . . Welch got shocked by his mike a lot at Auburn. . . Everybody hopes Ronnie gets some money from the charter aircraft company that last car-

ried Lynyrd Skynyrd . . . the band manager keeps warning Palmer in song "You're gonna get what's comin', you're gonna get what's comin' to you" . . . Welch just wants to do his gig and get out of Atlanta . . . a roady's girlfriend in San Francisco thinks he's coming to visit her in a few hours . . . New York was cold and snowy on the tour with Dave Mason. . . The PA system sounded great in Cleveland . . . Starship's an all right band to play warm up for . . . Heart's good in concert . . . girls with genuine "Georgia peach" accents are indescribably delicious . . . Philadelphia comes after Atlanta . . . ad infinitum.

Other issues get resolved too--sweat definitely reduces the body's electrical resistance . . . steel should be used more in house construction . . . the Auburn airport isn't open when the baseball team plays at home . . . small towns in south Alabama look like small towns in upper New York, only warmer . . . this certain girl at some certain place can do amazing things with a trailer hitch . . . Welch doesn't mind un-airconditioned autos . . . the Devil shocked him last night. . .

Columbus airport came into sight. Welch and his car rolled up late. Fleetwood was already waiting for a hamburger with everything at the airport cafe, while the percussionist and bass player were concentrating on a small pay TV screen. The gift shop didn't have much to offer for anybody.

Mick was munching on his hamburger and everything, when an unabashed groupie asked him if he got any sleep the night before.

"Four hours is enough," the seemingly intent drummer said, and then he painted a terse, very clear picture of crashing out around four a.m. and waking up a few hours later, headed for another city, another concert, another crowd, another day and yet another tour.

"Sounds like you'd make a good student," observed the fan, trying to be witty and failing dismally.

Mick responded with a long pause, and then a very soft spoken, "No sleep and drugs . . . No sleep and drugs." Suddenly, there was nothing to say.

Mick dropped some lettuce, picked it up and tossed it in the trash as he loped back toward the cafe.

Bob walked out of the bathroom. The band manager-den mother gave the student drivers a generous tip. Mick and Bob dropped in the gift shop, buying amusing trifles without bothering with price tags. The airport announcer gave the last call for Atlanta and points beyond. Last minute handshakes and fare-thee-wells followed, before Mick, Bob, den mother, musicians and men trooped on board, for Atlanta and points beyond.

God bless them in their points beyond.



Photo by Vickey Hunt

a young girl dreaming in a mirror

will you walk with me
and share the silence
of a day's conclusion.
maybe catch
an o'keefe sunset-
watch it
swirl, pant, melt
into luminous dusk
gently crying to sleep.
will you promise me a tug
at billowed sleeves
if i should fade to dancing
or linger in a bloom of yesterday.
will you watch with me
the stars cooing,
nestled in their
pileated beds of dark
with covers to the chin
like babes-
winking, nodding, winking.
will you walk with me?

Ken Taylor

Emotions

I thought I
saw
a tear running
down
your cheek.
Perhaps I only
imagined
it considering how
insentitive you
are.

Kathy Hartsell

Funny man
Magic hands
Creates a beauty
Eyes can not see.
A gift
From some unknown,
Sparkling diamond
Purest tone.

Liz Strange

Roll On, Oh Mighty Bird

Behold the graceful eagle!
In solitude, he wings his way
Across the heavens.
Tell me truly, oh mighty bird:
Did you forget to use
Your anti-perspirant today?

William Ross

A MYSTERY PLAY

Third Place, Sigma Tau Delta Fiction Contest

by Jimmy Grimes

Welcome to the House of Hidden Questions.

This place is a theater and a museum, a school and a church, and a sanctuary. It is a place of refuge for wandering questions which are out of favor in the real world. As long as there have been men, there have been questions, formulated by fools and persons of questionable sanity, which seem to be in no way related to the real world or the buttering of anyone's bread, but which seem nonetheless to have a disturbing effect on those who think on them for any length of time. Naturally, the wise and the prudent have acted quickly to remove these irresponsible questions from public view by sweeping them under generalizations, points of faith and patriotism. The wise and the prudent continue to clean the house of ideological trash in this way.

However, the only way to kill a question is to answer it, so the hidden questions have not died. When a question is driven out of the world, it wanders for a while in the darkness just beyond the edge of reality and finally finds its way to this place: the House of Hidden Questions, which straddles the border of reality and unreality.

This house exists primarily for you, the curious, the adventurous, the unsatisfied—in short, the unwise. Here you will hear a tale of another time and place, a tale which embodies one or more of the hidden questions. There are many things in this house, but nothing which you will find useful. This is a place not of learning, but of unlearning; not of assurance, but of doubt. You will take away from this place nothing which will improve your lot in the real world. All know this, but for some reason there are always many who come here and come back.

You are welcome here, but before you come in you must remember that there are only two ways to leave this house: You must answer all of the questions asked or you must forget what the questions were.

Come in.

Before the tale begins, you will be provided with three clues.

1. If God created all things, then God also created the serpent.
2. Prometheus brought man fire from heaven and was punished for it.
3. Jesus Christ, who died on a cross in Palestine, promised to come again. He did not say whether or not he had been before.

Two more hints that may help you: every question has more than one correct answer and the first question is this: What is the question being asked?

Let us begin.

In the closing years of the twentieth century, the race called man still lived in the world called earth, but it seemed his days were numbered. It seemed to man that he had come to a blank

and there was no way around it or through it. So, each man had resolved to live his life as comfortably as possible and, with any sort of luck, to die before the final whimper.

Henry Joseph, the jazzman, music's mystery man, came into this world from out of nowhere. He was first heard from playing in a medium-sized Southern city in a jazz club called the Gateway. He apparently had never had a gig before the Gateway. He talked the owner of the club into giving him and his group an audition early one morning. No one else was in the club when the audition was performed, but apparently the owner was impressed, because he hired Joseph's group on the spot. He didn't say anything to anyone about what he had heard that morning and nobody thought this was odd at the time, because no one had ever heard of Hank Joseph. And after Joseph's meteoric rise to fame no one had a chance to ask the owner of the Gateway what he had heard at Hank Joseph's audition because two days before Joseph opened, the owner of the Gateway shot himself neatly through the head.

And so Hank Joseph opened his first gig at an obscure, second-rate club, playing before a small crowd none of whom had come to listen, all of whom had come to drink.

The show started the same way every Hank Joseph set started thereafter. It started with his three sidemen coming in. Joseph used the same three sidemen throughout his tragically brief career and no one ever knew their names, which seems remarkable since they were vital to Hank Joseph's music. Of course, little was known of Joseph himself save his name.

The three sidemen came in. First, the bassman picked up his ax and started to thrum. Thrum's the right word. He started with just two notes, right down at the bottom of the instrument and started to play, th-rum, th-rum. But with a rhythm to it, steady, insistent. And, oh, the sound, that deep throbbing that came from the ebony hollows of that massive instrument. It filled the room, it filled the listeners and it started their guts throbbing with it. The air in the club got warm and muggy. Palms and brows began to sweat.

Then the drummer sat down behind his kit. He had a light touch. Never played hard. He liked the high hat. He liked brushes. His ride cymbal was a hiss, strong and steady, but like a snake's hiss. The drummer started to play and a sharp, thin chill cut through the warm throbbing of the bass, because the drumming sounded like a ghost running over dead leaves, like frozen fingers tapping at a window.

There was a sharp, hard, angry sound when the piano man suddenly hit a key. Then he hit another and another, seemingly at random. The schizophrenic piano player rapped out an abstract series of brittle, percussive notes, chords, tone clusters, each of which jolted the listeners like electric shocks. Then the

piano player stopped for a moment and listened, listened as the bassman took the listeners to dark, secret places, listened as the drummer whispered frightening things to them. The piano player listened a moment, then he began to vamp, a wild, bizarre pattern, that wove with the other sounds to form a fantastic tapestry of terrible alien music.

By this time, there was no talking in the Gateway. No glasses were clinking; no waiters were prowling. The world had diminished till there was nothing but the stand, the three men and their instruments. The time had come for Henry Joseph to make his first public appearance.

No one noticed him when he walked onto the stand. It would have been hard to see his entrance had anyone been paying attention, because Joseph moved quickly and inconspicuously, with an economy of motion, seeming to slither more than walk. Before anyone knew it, he was standing in the center of the stage, looking out at the audience, which was so entranced by the music already in progress that it did not notice Joseph. Joseph was a long, thin man who dressed demurely and always wore black gloves with three fingers cut out of the right-hand glove to allow him to play his horn freely. But the most impressive characteristic of Joseph was his eyes. They were a deep, fluid brown, almost black, and they were deep enough and wide enough to drown the whole world.



Photo by B.J. Hanrath

And so Hank Joseph stood unnoticed on the stage of the Gateway. And he held a beautiful silver trumpet that burned with its own fire.

Joseph gestured and the band decrescendoeed. The wild, hypnotic music dwindled away, drawing the audience's attention toward the vanishing point. Hank Joseph licked his lips. He brought his horn to his mouth. His facial muscles rippled and his lips drew back across his teeth. His lungs inflated.

A burst of gigantic music filled the room. The listeners gasped and started as a meteor shower of blazing notes sprayed out of the trumpet's bell.

Hank Joseph's music was angry music and sad music; it was the music of searching, but never of finding. It was music that spoke of joy in all things that are and grief because nothing is quite as it should be. It was jazz. Jazz is music from the soul and the soul of Henry Joseph was like a star, flaming in the void.

He washed the listeners in a stream of honeyed hell. The music seared the listeners. It frightened them; it made them sad; it made them angry; it affected them all. A woman sitting near the wall bit her lip so hard that blood flowed down and dribbled off her chin. One guy held his hands over his ears and closed his eyes as if to shut it all out. Some were moaning and some were crying. One kid stared at the man on the stand like Thomas must have stared at the wounds of Christ. No one tried to leave. No one could.

Hank Joseph played and played and while he played there was no time. There was no world, there was nothing but the man and the horn and the sound.

Suddenly it was over. No one knew when it ended or how it ended. All of a sudden, there was no sound and the stand was empty. The people in the club all wondered if they'd been asleep and dreaming. They hadn't been.

On the second night, there was a good crowd in the Gateway to hear Henry Joseph. On the third night, the crowd was out into the street. Joseph played three straight weeks at the Gateway before moving uptown. Soon, the Joseph phenomenon attracted nationwide attention. Inevitably, he was asked to appear in New York, in Los Angeles, everywhere. And he was offered innumerable recording contracts. His first and only album came out nine months after his initial appearance at the Gateway.

Never has there been any music like Hank Joseph's music. It was a less a work of art than an elemental force. No one hummed or whistled his music. No one could ever describe his music to anyone who had never heard it. But no one ever forgot it. People who heard Joseph once found that the music returned to them. They were haunted all the rest of their lives by the echo of that music.

All great music stirs the emotions. Great music makes people cry, laugh, rage. Hank Joseph's music went beyond all the world's great music. It changed people. Changed them truly, deeply, permanently.

Hank Joseph came into an apathetic world. Man had painted himself into a corner. He had created problems for himself for which he could create no answers. The people of the world were ready to give up, to lie down, to sleep.

Then came Hank Joseph. There was no apathy where Hank Joseph was. He did not inspire optimism in those who heard him; he did not inspire anger. Anger at the seeming hopelessness of things. And with anger came rejection of fate, and with anger came hope.

People who heard Hank Joseph could no longer be satisfied with being what they had been, no matter how worthy the lives they had led. There were many suicides, but there were also many transfigurations. Movements were born. New ideas were born. People who had devoted their whole lives to no more than surviving began to want more than merely tomorrow's bread.

Then, all of a sudden, Hank Joseph was gone and his going was no less a mystery than his arrival. It was less than eighteen months from Joseph's first performance to the night he disappeared, and in that short space, he changed the world. It seemed at first that his short stay had been enough. There was a new feeling in the air and hope was rampant. But in the years after Joseph's time, that feeling faded. There was one record album, but it did not have the same effect as live performance. Hank Joseph was not on Earth long enough to finish what he began, and only one man knows why.

Augustus Weldon was a strange man, but not a very noticeable one. He was a bank teller by profession and as is expected of a bank teller he was quiet and unassuming. However, there were sides to Gus Weldon that went beyond those of the ordinary bank teller. For one thing, Weldon had no desire for promotion at the bank. He was satisfied with his salary and with his status. Although he was not given to mixing socially with his colleagues from the bank, he was nonetheless fairly well liked because he was always friendly and also because of his quite noticeable lack of ambition. His fellow workers generally felt he was rather stupid which was rather stupid of them. Weldon was, in fact, a clever man.

It was not that Weldon was unmaterialistic, either. He was a sensualist of the deepest sort. But he was also a cynic. His opinion of his fellow men was so low that he simply did not care what they thought of him as long as they did not interfere with him; therefore, he felt no need to impress anyone.

Weldon's primary pleasures in life were three: reading, theological and metaphysical speculation, and women.

Weldon was a voracious reader. He lived in a small apartment and he kept the place lined with books. The tops of all tables and counters, the seats of all chairs were piled high with books. Most nights, he had to pull a double armload of reading matter off his bed and stack it neatly on the floor before he retired.

His preference was for weird fiction. He liked Poe; he liked Bradbury; he doted on Lovecraft, Machen, Dunsany and their kin. Outside of that genre, he was interested in ancient history, all religions old and new, and philosophical speculators.

Weldon was much given to thinking about the cosmos and reality and God and truth, although he had no real beliefs on any of these subjects. He delighted in constructing elaborate schemes to explain life and religion or whatever crossed his mind to try to explain, but he kept his theories at a safe distance from his own life. He was comfortable and the preservation of that comfort was of utmost importance to him. Strong belief in a great principle is not conducive to comfort; the feeling that nothing is really very important is conducive to comfort. Weldon was a cynical man and, in his way, a successful one.

As noted before, Weldon's third hobby was women. This is a very common hobby, but not one which is usually associated with quiet, bookish bank tellers. Such persons are supposed to be afraid of women; Gus was not. His opinion of women was low, but then his opinion of all humans was low. To Weldon, Woman was a game animal to be stalked. He tried all sorts of arrangements with women, but his preference was for the woman picked up in the single's bar or night club. He trained himself to mastery of all the routines which are effective in

such situations and he had an impressive record as a bar prowler. It was not so much the physical act of sex which gave Weldon pleasure as that of a successful hunt.

A man as comfortable as Augustus Weldon was doomed to fall hard, of course. And as one might expect his interest in women was at least the indirect cause of his downfall. For it was while searching for someone to share a bed with him that he found himself in a small club called the Gateway on what for Augustus Weldon was the worst of all possible nights: the night Henry Joseph debuted.

Like everyone who was in that club that night, Weldon left the club with something new seething inside him. He went home and to bed, but he could not sleep. The echo of Joseph's music raced through his mind. For the next three days, Weldon went about his business much as before. Then, he went back to the Gateway. This time the club was jammed full, but Weldon hardly noticed the people who jostled him. They noticed him no more.

The next day at the bank, as he counted out a pile of bills, Weldon felt a surge of nausea, accompanied by the skirling of unearthly music in his head. In between customers, he looked at the palms of his hands and fancied they had acquired a greenish tinge. He was no longer satisfied with being a bank teller.

He went home that evening and he tried to read, but none of his hundreds of books held any interest for him. They all seemed to have no bearing on anything is important. For the first time in his life, Gus Weldon felt there was something important he ought to be doing; he just didn't know what it was.

He went on like that for several weeks and during that time he found he had lost his ability to keep a scornful margin between himself and other people. Whereas he had in his heyday viewed all other humans with a sort of amused indifference, he had come to hate crusaders, reformers, and dreamers actively and he had come to envy the good, grey, mindless cattle whom he saw every day at his teller's window.

Yet it seemed to Weldon, as the weeks passed, that there were fewer and fewer of the grey ones and more and more of the restless ones. In the meantime, Hank Joseph had left the Gateway and exploded into national and international fame. Weldon began to imagine frightening things.

The day came when Weldon quit his job, went home, and wrote the following down in a notebook:

"I am finally forced to acknowledge something I have always known but which I have tried to deny: that there is evil in the world beyond human evil and that is a man's duty to resist that evil.

"How can I deny this when I have seen with my own eyes the evil one, when I have felt his influence in my own life. Call him Satan, call him Cthulhy, call him what you will, I know him now. God, he even looks like a snake.

"In Bloch's 'The Shadow from the Steeple,' Nyarlathotep took the form of a man in order to lead men to the discovery of nuclear weapons. Of course, the real enemy is much more subtle. He has no wish to destroy man with fire and radiation. He destroys happiness and contentment with music from Hell.

"He has ruined my life, but there is one thing I yet can do, one good, selfless act to culminate (and possibly end) my life."

Weldon bought a very large, very sharp-pointed knife. On the blade, he cut such symbols as his considerable knowledge of old occult beliefs seemed to indicate were appropriate. Then, he set out to stalk the great enemy of contentment and happiness.

It was a long trail. The hunt lasted several months, and Weldon often had scavenge or steal in order to eat. But Hank Joseph's music had filled him with fire and he would not rest until he had finished his great mission.

The trail ended in a hotel room in a large city nearly a year and a half after Hank Joseph's first appearance at the Gateway. Joseph was to be in the city for a week, playing every night. Weldon got there ahead of him and spent several days making careful preparations. One does not attempt to attack the devil without making careful preparations.

On the night Henry Joseph disappeared, Weldon made his way to the door to Joseph's room. The intensely private Joseph took no special security precautions. Weldon picked the lock, entered the room, then carefully relocked the door.

There was a deep closet in the room, in the corner just opposite the door. Weldon hid in the closet and waited for Joseph.

It seemed a very long time that he waited, turning the knife hilt over and over in his sweaty hand. But finally the lock clicked and the door opened. Weldon peeked through the crack between the closet door and the door jamb. The first thing he saw was Joseph's eyes. He started. He'd been afraid he might not be able to hide from such a creature as he suspected Joseph was and it seemed as if nothing could be hidden from those fantastic eyes. But if Joseph was aware of anything unusual, he showed no sign of it. He picked up his trumpet case, which he had set down so he could unlock the door, and he entered the

room, kicking the door shut behind him. He walked over to the bed and set his horn case down beside it. He took off his jacket and threw it on the bed, then he took off his gloves. Weldon saw why Joseph always wore gloves. His hands were badly scarred. Those scars reminded Weldon of something, but he couldn't think what.

Joseph picked up his jacket and walked toward the closet. Weldon tensed. When Joseph was about two steps from the door, Weldon burst out, stabbing savagely at Joseph's chest. The knife slipped neatly between the ribs and pierced Joseph's heart. Joseph didn't shout; he merely said "No" in a quietly desperate way. Recoiling from the attack, he fell away from Weldon, who was gripping his shirt front convulsively. The buttons popped off the shirt. Weldon let go and Joseph hit the floor. Weldon saw that there were scars all over Joseph's long, thin body, especially the right side of the chest which looked as if it had been mangled by some sort of animal. Weldon knew that the wounds that caused those scars would have killed any man.

Joseph was still alive. He looked up at Weldon and Weldon saw something in those fantastic eyes that he had never seen before.

"Again and again," said Joseph. "Again and again. This is the last time. I've done all I can. There is no hope for you. What is it I have brought into the world?"

Then he died.

Augustus Weldon looked at the body. He looked at the scars on the hands, he looked at the long scar low on the right side, he considered the terrible damage that had been done to the right chest, that could have been the work of a cruel bird. He considered the other, innumerable scars. Weldon cried.



Upon Hearing Beethoven's Op. 29, No. 2 (Moonlight Sonata)

Hands
Suspended
Above the ivories
Lightly descending, caressing
Sharps, the soul unwinds and hands
Flow slowly over the keys,
Resounding "G's" vibrate
Crescendos and decrescendos
Embrace, elevate, enfold
Shadows dart in and out opaque measures
Subtle overtones suggest mysterious raptures
Pulsating chords reluctantly surrender
To the stroking serenity of
Suspended
Hands.

Cindy Jones

Decay of Color

So I knock on my guns and escape through art
Which is falling apart at the seams;
It's a crime to be poor when you're young at heart
In the wasteland of festering green.

What is taught in the schools has no pomp or pith
What is not passes over my head;
So I scream and I fight - it's my bloody right
In the wasteland of wanton red.

For the peas and the parrots have all grown dim,
Love of life's gone to ruin and rack;
"Let me be," so she said when we found her dead
In the wasteland of common black.

S. Frederick



Mr
SAMUEL
WATSON
1781

HERE
LIES THE BODY
OF DAVID
FORBES WHO DIED
THE 10TH DAY OF DECEMBER
IN THE 25TH
YEAR OF HIS AGE
THE YEAR 1781

Are You Kin To Kunta?

by Linda Lewis

Alex Haley, with the phenomenal success of his epic novel, *Roots*, touched off a whole new surge of interest in genealogy and for weeks thousands of Americans wondered if they were kin to Kunta Kinte. But genealogy is more than just a fad, and many, like Mrs. Carolyn Parker, of Auburn, have long been interested in the subject.

Mrs. Parker, wife of former Dean W.V. Parker, has been involved in the study of ancestry for years. She remembers becoming interested in the subject when she was a small child and an older relative related a story about living among the Indians. Intrigued by this small link with her family's past, Mrs. Parker, like Haley, was led to search deeper into the lives of those who preceeded her.

"I think you learn more real history through genealogy," said Mrs. Parker, "than you do by studying any history books."

Genealogy not only offers a greater appreciation for history, it presents a tangible link to the past . . . the origin of the family name, the birthplace of ancestors, the date of their coming to this country and what they did in their lifetimes. "Most likely you will find several people you will be proud of, but there is the chance you will find some black sheep," said Mrs. Parker.

She found records of thirteen relatives that had participated in the Revolutionary War. She complained that many people seem to have the idea that they're more

"select" if their family fought in the Revolutionary War or has royal English ties, but she claims to be more interested in the unique backgrounds her ancestors might have had.

"Pridgens or Pridgion was my mother's maiden name and Stephen Pridgen is the subject of the book I published in 1970. Stephen gave his life for the Confederate States of America. He died at a

Mrs. Parker Was Into Genealogy Before It Was A Fad

Yankee prison camp in Ohio. My purpose in writing my book was to show others what I learned of the many contributions our ancestors have made to the development of the land they loved, in the hope that others will investigate their heritage and discover similar backgrounds."

Mrs. Parker warns the beginner that keeping all the information straight is a very complicated business. "You accumulate so much, you go through cemeteries and census records and it's difficult to keep everything together." Mrs. Parker also warns against

trying to find out about your relatives a hundred years ago when beginning research. "The best place to start is with oneself and his parents and work back three or four generations."

Good source materials include such readily-available things as family Bibles which contain birth, marriage and death records, cemetery records from county court houses and old newspapers. One very valuable source is older family members. "If you find someone who knows some of your family's history, get it immediately," advises Mrs. Parker, "if there are publications containing information about your family's history, do not hesitate to pay the price. Genealogical books are printed in limited quantity and become more and more valuable as time goes on."

There is a variety of publications on the general study of ancestry. One useful book is Doane's "Searching for Your Ancestor." Everton Publishers, 526 North Main Street, Logan, Utah, can give list prices on their genealogical information and supplies. Mrs. Parker especially recommends their *Handy Book for Genealogists* by George Everton and Gunnar Rasmusson. It tells when every county in the United States was organized and also gives information about where to go for records in each state.

One of the most exciting things Mrs. Parker finds in her studies is the talents and abilities of her ancestors. "My sister took up painting as a hobby," recalls Mrs. Parker, "I wondered whatever made her think she could paint.

Then I began to discover more and more people in our family that had the same talent . . . you see it could be inherited. If you're able to find out these family talents you might could encourage them in your children someday, or maybe even in yourself."

Mrs. Parker owns several elaborate family trees given to her by people she met in her studies. "That's one of the nice things

about genealogy. You come across these people when you least expect it. Maybe they work in a census bureau or in a county courthouse, but most of the time they are very interested in helping you."

One may find heroes or skeletons in the closet; the good and bad findings usually balance out. Mrs. Parker reflected that genealogy can make the humble proud and

the proud humble. But perhaps the best attitude to take toward a study of genealogy is that taken by James Agee and manifested in his work, *Let Us Now Praise Famous Men*: the greatest reward in searching for your "roots" is the finding that your ancestors were good people who endured, and that you can claim that heritage for yourself.



Photo by Gordon Bugg

The Rains of Illisay

By David M. Petrizzi

The water ran freely down tiny green leaves and accumulated within the walls of bamboo stalks. Rain had fallen in torrents and left an azure topsoil beneath the heavily canopied jungle forest. For several hours it rained and left the earth soaked with moisture that had nowhere to drain. Here the water remained until the sluggish Luzon soil absorbed it.

Stomu peered briefly out the canvased doorway to see if the primitive drainage system he toiled to build was working. It was one of the few successful projects he had completed in his stay here. He watched the water drain around the bamboo and nipa dwelling into the darkness behind the small clearing that surrounded him.

The hut was elevated about one meter above the ground on pillars of bamboo lashed neatly with abaca-hemp. The roof was thatched with nipa and sealed with a crude rubber coating. The only opening was a canvased doorway.

Stomu turned his gaze to the ceiling. "I wonder if the roof will hold this time; the rain seems to get stronger," he said aloud. His gaze fell to a field pack lying empty on the rough mahogany floor, then hesitated on a rifle beside the pack. Why do I keep that thing? he mused to himself. He pulled the canvas aside and again peered into the grey rain.

"Stomu," a voice called. "Get out of that rain! You'll get sick again." It was his mother. A well-disciplined Japanese woman, she was petite, but he knew he mustn't let the rage swell in her. He had let that happen before and it wasn't pleasant. Rage was easily aroused in his mother, seemed that way since he could remember. It also seemed to intensify as he got older and with his father's increasing absence.

Stomu walked out of the rain into the foyer of the mission house. The warmth of the stove reached out from the adjacent kitchen and the taste of squid and rice floated around his nose.

"Why do you insist on getting wet?" she said. "You'll get sick and miss more school," she

scolded as she hustled off his wet clothing.

"Mama--"

"Go and prepare for dinner. Your father should be home soon and we'll eat as soon as he arrives."

Stomu went to the basin to wash off the water he had accumulated on his walk home from school. Father probably won't be home for dinner tonight either, he pondered. Who can I tell of the agony I have to endure in school? Maybe Mother knows--but neither ever lets on. Classes are just no fun anymore--when you have no friends. He poured the water over his hands as he eyes searched for the soap.

Stomu pulled his hand back into the hut. He took the water he had cupped in the boat of his hand and raised it to his lips. Pure and sweet it tasted, yet if faintly echoed the dismal, vivid memories of Osaka. He sighed and wiped his hand on his breast.

Stomu Yamashita was a stout man, yet he was fragile in health and manner. Perhaps it was his father's genes that made him so. He resembled his father in many ways. He was lighter in complexion than most Japanese and much taller. However, the feature that stood out the most was his curly hair, hair that was a source of ridicule in the fever of pre-war Japan.

Stomu's father was an American missionary in Osaka at the time and his mother was a laundry woman at the mission house. He was a deeply religious yet deviously hypocritical man; she was an insecure woman, gentle at one time but the birth of an illegitimate half-breed son became as much a burden to her as it was to Stomu.

All lived as happily as they could until his father was deported as an enemy of the empire in 1941. Stomu and his mother never saw Reverend Dawson again. A short while later his mother died. Pre-war Osaka became a difficult place to live for anything remotely Christian or Caucasian.

Stomu was sent to an army camp as a Japanese citizen and trained in the art of warfare. He didn't know why he felt many of the things he did--he didn't understand his aversion to war and neither did his comrades. He was given a gun and told to kill Americans and anyone else the Emperor told him to kill. A daze enveloped him throughout this entire experience.

Finally, it has stopped. I can gather fruit for the night, Stomu thought to himself as he eased out of the hut into the moist aftermath of the rain. The ground gave way to his feet as he glided briskly through an opening in the foliage--one that revealed itself constantly. He slipped several times but managed to balance himself in the mud by familiar overhanging limbs.

Presently, he entered a large grove of colorful fruits. In front of him trees groaned, heavily laden with mango, papaya and bananas. There were also herbs, berries, nuts and not far off, termite hills with a sweet fungus. Nearby to the left of the grove there was a hive and honey. One of his favorite trees, the beetle nut, loomed before him. He would stop on his way back. He could hear the palm fronds rustle gently against each other in the breeze.

With his machette Stomu gathered a diversity of nourishment for the evening. For over an hour he sat and chewed the juicy inner core of the beetle nut; its red dye had long ago left stains in his teeth and gums. The lushness of this place sometimes was more than he could endure. He ran through the pathway back to the hut, felt the moist wind seethe past his ears and heard the blood rushing in his head.

"Run, half-breed. Show me how fast you can run," yelled the instructor. Stomu increased his pace through the camp training course, laden with full combat gear and preceding a hail of bullets only by inches. He slipped and fell, the spinning lead whirling above his head like frenzied insects. His mind reeled in wonderment. What if I'm killed here?

"Get up, Yankee, get up and run or you will die here!" screamed the instructor. No one came to help him, no one even laughed at him. Afraid to get up he crawled quickly down the path and into a hole filled with murky water. He left his gun in the mud. The consequences of this action to be drilled into him for the remaining weeks prior to his combat assignment.

Another piece of light green rind splashed into a puddle outside the door of Stomu's hut. He had thrown all the debris from his meal into the water-filled indentation. Night was beginning to mingle with the sky and Stomu made the standard arrangements for sleep. As he did this he pondered the texture and color of the papaya he had just eaten. The rind was the same color but the meat was red. He never encountered red papaya before--it was strangely different from the usual yellow ones. The taste was very bland. He placed a beetle nut in his mouth. Soon the euphoria would relieve the depression of darkness. He had no light

and to stay awake meant thinking. Sometimes he wished he couldn't hear himself think.

Preparation for sleep consisted of rolling out the woven mat and seeing to it that the canvas door was sealed tight. He knew it was too much to ask but he hoped the insects would rest some tonight. He spat the nut's remnants out the door before sealing it. As he neared the mat he let out a belch. He followed with a small laugh, as little absurdities like this reminded him that all was not really a dream. As he lay back, he closed his eyes and envisioned the seemingly hostile menagerie around him.

Lizards began their evening discussions. The moonless canopy slowly covered Stomu's jungle paradise. His body relaxed with the darkness. Deep inside the void there was no sleep, something clawed at him--fritted back and forth and left a dull pounding he couldn't stop. He felt so many thoughts presenting themselves--demanding answers--all at the same time--his mind raced then danced but never stood still as sleep's blurr of departure encapsulated him.

The training film showed life-like American soldiers herding a number of Nippon prisoners into a stockade. Stomu could see himself among them, his face badly bloodied and his clothes torn. The soldiers had maniacal grins upon their faces as they kicked and battered the prisoners. Stomu was shoved into a bamboo cage, one constructed with the average size Japanese in mind. These cages were piled one atop the other and filled two to a cage. Because Stomu was larger than the others he was barely able to squeeze into his cage. This was a stimulus for further jeering from the American soldiers.

"Well, well--look at what we have here?" chided one. "Hey you, are you half German?" said another. "You yellow ox! Are you a misguided Nazi experiment?" screamed a fat sergeant as he poked Stomu several times through the cage with a bayonet. "He bleeds, look at him, just like those other nips!" he taunted. The others laughed even louder. His comrades in the cages around him laughed and jeered, then those watching the training film with him in the theater laughed and began prodding him with knives and swords. "Look what we have here!" they screamed. "Look at this!" he heard again and again. It echoed in his mind over and over. Stomu screamed.

Light pierced the nightmare and Stomu's body yanked clear of the darkness. A sweat had accumulated all over his body, sweat that attracted mosquito bites almost as painful as the knife wounds he had received in the dream. He raised

himself from the mat as an intense rainbow-hued light entered the hut. He winced backward in pain. Recovering from the momentary shock he flung open the door to face the only reality he knew, the reality of the jungle.

After a breakfast of mango, coconut, and beetle nut, Stomu set out to check his monkey traps stopping along the way to relieve himself of the previous evening's dinner. The journey to the first trap was a little more rugged than the one to the fruit grove. There was an area of quicksand that he had to circumvent and many hollows that he had to watch carefully for the presence of snakes. Once on this route he tripped over a huge log he discovered afterwards to be a python four meters in length. The python continued to bask in the sun as if nothing had occurred.

When he neared the trap he immediately knew by the chattering that he had caught something. A spider monkey clawed and fretted about inside, angry with the situation he found himself in. His eyes were a fiery red and his teeth bared as a warning for Stomu to heed. The little cage would hold the creature until Stomu could stick a knife through him. He disliked killing, but on occasion he craved meat. The diversity of fruit did not seem enough for him to survive. With no fire he had become accustomed to eating the meat raw as he had done with lizards and birds' eggs. He couldn't fully understand why he did it nor why he enjoyed it as much as he did.

Stomu pulled his blade from its sheath. A sweat began to break on his brow, and he felt a weakening inside him. His hand trembled as he recalled his awakening sweat and the nightmare that caused it. The forboding presence of moisture increased on his face and hands.

The patrol entered the Filipino barrio with ease. Reports indicated that it was abandoned by both American and Filipino troops. The streets were silent as Stomu and several other members of an advance scout patrol crossed into the center square. All but Stomu were tense fingers resting heavily on triggers and their bodies in a highly reactive state.

The commander signaled the men to check the huts for people, weapons, or food. They scattered into the deadening silence and began the search. Stomu headed for the church, his rifle slung over his shoulder. A cry came from one of the others and they all responded. Stomu ran in the direction of the cry.

They found several women and children huddled under the laced underpinning of a hut. Stomu could not envision, as a reality, what was about to happen. He tried to prevent it but they shoved him aside and kept him contained with a gun. He

watched as women and children were beaten, raped and then killed. Only after it was over did they let Stomu retreat into the wilderness in tears. He was jeered and laughed at as he dragged his gun behind him into a densely canopied area and sat down. Alone he sat as the rest of the patrol scavenged through the buildings for food and weapons, their need for women and children satiated. He drifted away again, into the thick daze that hovered around him increasingly more often. Again Stomu's past seemed to synchronize with his present.

Stomu's eyes lingered with numbness on the cage. The monkey, less excited now, huddled in a corner with a sardonic grin on its face. The hesitation seemed an eternity. Stomu's mind reeled: I sit a stone in its wake, silly I, on the edges looking in, for the edges, looking to see if I have looked, and having seen remain unseen, on the inside looking in, past the outside where I've been. He opened the cage, gently prodded the monkey with a stick until it sprang out the door. He watched it scurry through the brush and up a nearby datun palm. A smile covered his face as he stood up to follow the

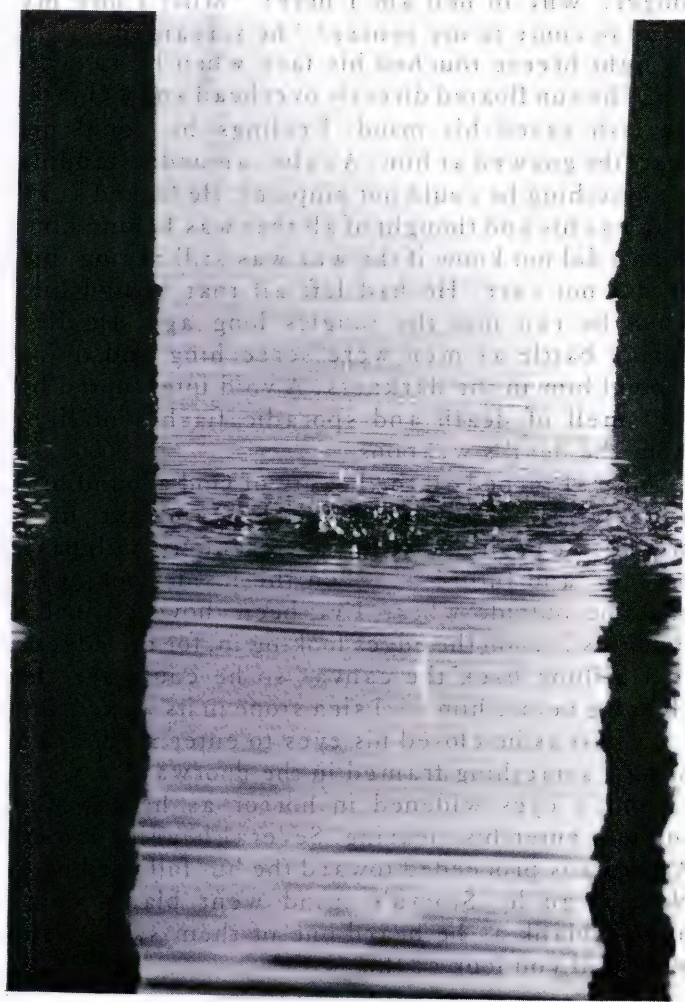


Photo by Mark Willis

monkey with his eyes. The monkey lingered in the palm--briefly turned to look at Stomu--then darted into the jungle labyrinth.

A genuine feeling engulfed Stomu, one he never felt before. He kicked the cage into the dense growth just beyond him and followed with hearty, maniacal laughter. He felt the sweat dry as he proceeded to the other traps, enveloped in a happiness he could not understand.

Stomu released all the monkeys; and as he neared his clearing, thoughts continued to ricochet back and forth in his mind. He slowed his stride, stared up at the patches of blue that broke through the surrounding green. What is this all about. Why can't I comprehend all that is presented to me? so many things I don't understand about myself and why I feel one way and then another. Why must people fight and kill each other? It would be so nice to see someone, anyone, again. I kid myself--both of my halves would kill me upon sight. Perhaps I should never have run away? Maybe I should have died on the battle field in glory for the emperor or maybe in an American cage. Perhaps it would be far less painful to die than to continue this crazy existence. Is this a paradise? Am I insane? How can I continue to survive as well as I do for much longer? Why in hell am I here? "Must I lose my mind to come to my senses?" he screamed.

A light breeze touched his face when he saw his hut. The sun floated directly overhead and a crystal warmth eased his mind. Feelings he could not describe gnawed at him. A calm, an understanding of something he could not pinpoint. He looked at all that was his and thought of all that was behind him. Stomu did not know if the war was still raging, but he did not care. He had left all that behind him when he ran into the jungles long ago. He fled during battle as men were screeching and dying around him in the darkness. A void interrupted by the smell of death and sporadic flashes of light from the devil's weapons.

Stomu absorbed all the beauty of God around him and sighed. He entered the hut and sat in a meditative position. He felt a synchronicity with past, present, and future . . . on the inside looking in, past the outside where I've been, hovered in his thoughts . . . on the edges looking in, for the edges . . . He flung back the canvas so he could see the clearing before him . . . I sit a stone in its wake, silly I . . . Just as he closed his eyes to enter meditation he saw something framed in the doorway.

Stomu's eyes widened in horror as he saw the soldiers enter his clearing. Several heavily armed Americans proceeded toward the hut followed by a Negrito guide. Stomu's mind went blank, completely blank as he heard one of them say "Well, well, will you look at this."

(API) Manila. Officials of the USAF Jungle Survival School at Clark Air Base in the Philippines today announced the discovery of a Japanese soldier. Spokesmen said that a squad of Jungle School graduates were in the unexplored jungle area of Illisay Province accompanied by a Negrito guide, as part of their final survival test, when they came across the encampment.

Sources indicated that Stomu Yamashita, a private in the Imperial Japanese Army, attempted to fire a rusted weapon at the members of the squad and it exploded in his face. Pvt. Yamashita died before medical evacuation could reach the scene.

Members of the Japanese embassy are currently in Manila making arrangements for transportation of Pvt. Yamashita's body to Osaka Japan and subsequent burial.

Fifty-three year old Pvt. Yamashita had lived in the deeper jungles of Illisay Province since 1942. He apparently did not know that World War II had been over for 35 years.

Map

She gives her white to sleep
her shoulders slope around
the dark behind her eyes
moist in slumber's optics

Spine follows inclined head
arch of unconsciousness
linked in a tapered seam
along her night's black breaths,

Lips flare in winged crescent
focused and pale around
the slender vigilance
of her whispering lungs

Drowsing pool of hair whirled
as gold is shadowed green
to vortices of curls
from the floor of her dream

Hands blurred casually
in spirals of fingers
calm vaults over her palms
walls cupped out of marble

Where her unseen life moves
in a hushed procession
over the cobbled pulse
through her heart's small chambers.

Donald Sereast

The Swing

“We impute deep-laid far-sighted plans to Caesar....”
--Ralph Waldo Emerson

I

And now they've left the pony swing
To canter rashly in the winter wind
Beneath the dusty snow until spring.

The flaking pony shrinks without a friend
To spur him through the frozen trough
That scuffing shoes have scraped beneath the bend

Of his resilient back. His soft
Pathetic eyes are chipped. From leafless limbs,
Two ropes depend to hold his hoofs aloft.

II

But tethered to a tree where childish whims
Become a play, a toy horse
Commands the mind for distant stratagems,

Inspires from tiny lips a martial chorus.
Astraddle in the April sun,
The boy breeds the infancy of force.

On such a back did gallant Pershing stun
An easy foe? Did Mosby learn to run?
Or Caesar broach a brinkless Rubicon?

Ronald Giles

First Place Sigma Tau Delta Poetry Contest

The Senate Race

The Circle continues along the 1978 campaign trail, presenting interviews with three men who now, especially since George Wallace withdrew from the race, are sound possibilities to replace political institution John Sparkman in the U.S. Senate.

Heflin

Former Alabama Supreme Court Chief Justice Howell Heflin is considered by many to be the odds-on favorite to win the U.S. Senate race, particularly since Gov. Wallace's May 16 announcement he will not enter, and even the friendly Tusculum native is pleased by the early indications.

"It has been real gratifying," he said. "I've been leading practically every student government association-sponsored poll in the state, and we've been well pleased with those results."

Although speculations abound, the actual campaigning hasn't started yet. "We've been running a low-profile campaign so far," Heflin said. "We're basically organizing and raising funds, going into a county and meeting the supporters."

But the pace of the campaign will definitely pick up this summer as the candidates shoot for the September Democratic primary, and probably no one is looking forward to it more than Heflin. "I'm not running now so I can run for state office at a later date, and I'm not running for the exercise," he said. "I wouldn't be in the race

unless I thought I would win."

Election campaign platforms are built on issues, but instead of focusing on one single issue, Heflin has attacked the general "aimlessness" of American government, with its corresponding bureaucratic growth, as the major issue of the campaign.

"I made a speech in which I said America has made a lot of mistakes, but our government's still the best. Someone asked me, 'What do you consider the greatest mistake?'"

"I haven't tried to give any one problem priority, but since that time I've decided that the greatest mistake America has made is that we're drifting without direction toward bigger and bigger government."

Heflin sees "drifting without leadership as to solutions, or without a game plan," as dangerous. "This drifting can lull you into a state of complacency," he explained.

Like his other two announced opponents (Anniston State Sen. Donald Stewart and State Sen. John Baker of Rainsville), Heflin contends he can end this drifting. As proof, he cites the improvements in the Alabama judicial system which were made during

his six-year term as the state's highest appellate judge.

Heflin offers these examples:

--A 16 percent reduction of criminal cases in circuit courts over four years (1972-75) despite a 48 percent increase in new cases.

--An 11.3 percent reduction in the backlog of civil cases in circuit courts over four years (1972-1975) despite a 23 percent increase in new cases.

--A current docket with no backlogs in all three Alabama appellate courts, including the Supreme Court, Alabama Court of Criminal Appeals and Alabama Court of Civil Appeals.

--Adoption of new appellate court procedure rules, new civil practice and procedure rules, and a "Constitution for Courts" adopted in 1973: the Judicial Article amendment to the State Constitution, which provided for a unified court system and required that every judge must be licensed to practice law.

--Creation of a Department of Court Management (for administrative support), a Permanent Study Commission on Alabama's Judicial System and a new judicial disciplinary procedure, to replace the "cumbersome and

seldom used" impeachment process.

--Abolishing the office of Justice of the Peace.

--Adopting a new Code of Professional Responsibility for state lawyers, a law student internship program to provide "clinical education" for prospective lawyers, new Canons of Judicial Ethics and a five-year plan for court modernization which will include a new State Criminal Code and new rules of criminal procedure.

--The creation of a Small Claims Court which allows opposing parties to litigate claims up to \$500 without having to retain an attorney, and a District Court system to replace the intermediate court system which operated in Alabama prior to 1975.

Heflin received nationwide recognition for his efforts. In 1976 he was elected chairman of the Conference of Chief Justices, and that same year, he was chosen the outstanding appellate judge in the nation, honored by the Association of Trial Lawyers in America.

"In a short span of five years, Alabama's judicial system has been transformed from a fragmented framework of courts into a streamline operation where justice is dispensed in a speedy, inexpensive and businesslike manner," states a release from Heflin's campaign headquarters.

Heflin proudly points out articles in *The Christian Science Monitor* (Alabama Aims To Rebuild Antiquated Court System), *The New York Times* ("Alabama Praised On Court Reform"), *The Washington Post* ("Alabama State Courts: A Model For The Nation") and other newspapers which praised Alabama's revised court system.

However, Heflin's opponents have also been citing his Supreme Court record, trying to turn it to Heflin's disadvantage. For example, in a recent Montgomery speech, Wallace, while still an apparent candidate, also pointed out Heflin's judicial re-

forms, though not to compliment him.

Wallace criticized the increased judicial pensions which were included in the Judicial Article. "I've been tempted just to sit back from this campaign, since one of my opponents came to Montgomery for just six years and got himself a pension of nearly \$30,000 a year for the rest of his life."

The son of a Methodist Minister, Howell Heflin was born June 19,



Heflin

1921, and spent much of his boyhood travelling through North Alabama towns, as his father's career dictated.

He served as a Marine Corps officer in World War II, where he was wounded twice and received the Silver Star for gallantry, as well as other decorations.

Heflin received his B.A. degree from Birmingham-Southern College, and his law degree from the University of Alabama. While in college, he was a member of Omicron Delta Kappa leadership honorary and Phi Delta Phi legal fraternity.

He then moved to Tuscumbia, where he practiced law for 23 years. He served as a member of the Alabama Law School Foundation, Alabama Tenure Commission, Alabama Commission for Better Schools and Alabama Ethics Commission. Heflin has also served as president of the Alabama Bar Association.

In 1971, he announced his candidacy for Chief Justice of the State Supreme Court. Heflin was elected by a two-to-one margin, receiving 95 percent of the votes in his home county. He ran on a platform promising to modernize the then-outdated state court system.

After his term ended last year, he returned to Tuscumbia to practice law and prepare for the 1978 U.S. Senate campaign.

Heflin must realize that the voters of Alabama will not be looking at his personal biography or his Supreme Court record as much as they will be listening to his promises of what he plans to do in Congress, especially in a decade which finds taxpayers increasingly frustrated, government growing and prices increasing.

But for Heflin, the current problems can all be linked to that concept of "drifting," and relates America's energy crunch to this idea.

"This seems to be an issue where you need a long-range team effort," he said. "Current proposals aren't meeting the problem. For example, taxing isn't the solution to the consumer conservation problem."

Of all the long-range energy alternatives currently being considered, Heflin said he leans toward solar energy as a possible solution. "It's a great possibility," he said. "The idea of a space colony orbiting the earth above the two poles has potential."

However, Heflin refuses to join the doomsayers who predict an eventual disappearance of the

world's energy resources. "I think mankind's engineering knowledge is capable of solving the energy problem yet," he claims.

Using nuclear power as an example, he said, "There is fear that we can't produce nuclear energy safely, but I'm not willing to say that our engineers aren't able to produce a safe product. We shouldn't just stop building all nuclear power plants."

The recent energy crunch has also brought another problem into focus. President Jimmy Carter submitted his energy bill to Congress soon after his inauguration, but has had a difficult time getting Congress to cooperate with him in forming an energy policy. Heflin says he would promote more cooperation between the White House and Capitol Hill if elected.

"You have to look at history," he said. "We've accomplished more things when the Congress and the President have worked together, or else they've just maintained the status quo. They've got to get together, work together and stop the drifting."

Carter found himself under criticism from other government officials as well as Congress for his decision not to spend more money in developing the highly-controversial "neutron bomb," a nuclear weapon which would kill soldiers while inflicting relatively minor damage on property.

Heflin also disagrees with Carter's decision. "Based on what I have read, I believe Carter has made a mistake in delaying work on the neutron bomb. He lost a potent bargaining option.

"I think we should go ahead and build it. I don't know whether the Russians have the expertise to develop such a bomb, so the neutron bomb could be a good deterring force."

Back on the homefront, though, another battle would appear to be shaping up in Congress: a kind of

modern-day Civil War between the "Frostbelt" and the "Sunbelt," though battles are fought in the House and Senate Chambers, not in battlefields.

"There were 33 bills passed just this past year which would limit Sunbelt growth and give the advantage to Northern states," Heflin pointed out.

As an example, he cited a highway appropriations bill which would give priority in funding to the states whose highways have the biggest potholes. "It doesn't take much to figure out that Massachusetts highways probably have more and bigger potholes than those in Alabama," he said.

"And some Northern senators changed a community funding bill so that growth lag and age of housing would be a factor in deciding which states got funding. As a result, the Northern states are in far better shape."

There are those who see the Sunbelt's problems as only beginning, because the Southern senators, who used to be powerful chairmen of important Senate committees because of seniority guidelines, have been retiring this decade, including Sparkman, who currently chairs the Senate Foreign Relations Committee.

As Heflin explains, "At one time, seven out of 11 major committees were chaired by Sunbelt senators. There are five now, and there will be only three (Sen. James Eastland, D-Miss., is also retiring) when the new Congress convenes."

For the South to retain tactical equality, "We've got to rely on the individual," he said.

And Heflin, like the others, thinks he is that individual.

Baker

John Baker thinks being the youngest likely candidate in Alabama for U.S. Senator is to his advantage.

"I think age itself is an issue in this campaign," said the 33-year-old candidate, who will turn 34 a month before the November election. The other probable candidates for U.S. Senator are Judge Howell Heflin, 57, and State Senator Donald Stewart.

While Baker said he felt there were "three good candidates in the race as far as I am concerned," he said, because of his age, his candidacy "may have particular appeal to college students.

"I don't know what the students' opinion of the Senate's seniority system is, but the South has benefitted in particular from it," Baker said.

The seniority system is an informal rule of the U.S. Senate which says, in effect, that when a committee chairmanship is open, the new chairman will be a senator from the majority party with the longest continuous service on that committee.

Baker pointed to Sen. James Eastland of Mississippi and Sen. John Sparkman of Alabama as examples of how the South has benefitted from the seniority system. Both retiring senators achieved high positions over the years of their service. Eastland will retire this year from the chairmanship of the Judiciary Committee, and Sparkman is retiring from the chairmanship of the Foreign Relations Committee.

"If I was elected now," Baker calculated, "When I reach the same age Judge Heflin is now, I would have served four terms."

Baker thinks this longevity is extremely important in competing with other states. "We need to be able to play the same ball game with the same expertise," Baker said. "The trend nationally has been to send young, qualified people to the Senate, so they can work and stay in and achieve high positions within the seniority system."

He pointed out the consequences if Judge Heflin were elected this year. Because of his age, Baker said, "Two

by John Carvalho



terms effectively would be all he could serve. That would be fine if we (the states) were playing the same game," Baker said. He noted, however, if other states' senators stay in longer lengths of time than Alabama's do, Alabama would not be competing nationally. "We want to make sure we have the same power as other states."

Baker said he decided to run for U.S. Senate after serving in the state legislature, "because of the opportunity to serve and participate in decisions for the future."

Baker's interest in politics goes back to his childhood, he says, when politicians "were people I looked up to."

Baker grew up in Northport, Kilpatrick, and Crossville and at 22, graduated from the University of Alabama with a law degree.

Baker worked his way through school, because "My parents, both school teachers, weren't capable of helping very much. I got some help from home, but not very much."

Working through college was never something Baker regretted, though. "I think people who have to earn their education appreciate it more," he said, "I believe it instills a desire to achieve, and it builds an incentive to succeed in life."

Baker said it was not necessary to sing a different song while speaking before campus groups. "Students are interested in the same things as other people. I say pretty much the same thing to all groups of people."

The state legislator says his record speaks for itself. He represented DeKalb and Cherokee counties in the state House of Representatives from 1970 to 1973. In 1973, in a special election, he was elected to the State Senate.

During that time, Baker feels he earned the title, "Loyal opposition to the leadership," primarily because he advocated "not legislation based on a particular interest, but legislation based on merit."

Baker thinks he helped accomplish "somewhat of a balance of power," especially in the light of what he considers his two greatest achievements, two court cases he filed to "defend the Alabama constitution."

The first was a suit he filed "to prohibit executive takeover of the budget." The

Supreme Court upheld his contention that the governor could not appropriate the state budget by executive order. Baker considers this case the "most significant thing I did."

The other case he mentioned was a 1975 suit he won which asked the Supreme Court to declare a governor's pension bill unconstitutional.

Baker says he developed in those legislative years a dislike of special interest groups. He said his dislike of special interests led him to take on "people from probate judges to district attorneys" on supernumerary retirement resolutions, and to take action on legislation he believed was only put forward at the interest of one group.

"There were several bills I took on where one interest was trying to get something. I either filibustered and killed it or successfully got it amended."

His efforts in the state legislature were twice rewarded by the Capitol press corps. In 1973 Baker was named Outstanding Freshman Senator and in 1975 he was selected Hardest Working Senator.

Baker considers the filibuster in the U.S. Senate "an effective tool. Contrary to what a lot of people think," Baker said, "a filibuster effectively used in matters of considerable importance is a much needed tool in the legislative process. If we didn't have that tool, the country would be in jeopardy from some legislation."

Baker said he realized the filibuster "has been abused in Alabama on occasion and used to destroy the legislative process," but he still felt it was a necessary tool.

Baker hesitated at first to judge the effectiveness of Alabama Senator Jim Allen's well-known filibusters in the U.S. Senate. "I don't know how he compares on a national level," Baker said. "We hear more about him because he is our senator."

Senator Allen did, Baker decided, use the filibuster "more frequently and more effectively than anybody else in the U.S. Senate."

Baker also believes media reports of a rift between the president and congress are exaggerated.

"I don't think it's a problem of lack of communication," Baker said. "I think the problem is based more on the issue. Carter did pretty well in working with the

legislature on the Panama Canal treaty."

Baker blamed the friction between Carter and the legislature on term differences. "The Senate and the House are closer to the people," Baker said. "They have to be since they run for office more frequently. The legislature reflects the thinking of the majority of people more than the president."

One of the issues Baker feels requires both the president's and the legislature's attention is farming.

"I am in sympathy with the farmers," Baker said. "I don't think they got anything out of the deal Congress gave them. Our farmers are in bad shape with crop failure and costs escalating. I don't think they really got help from Washington."

"But, Baker admits, "I don't think I could have been much more receptive than our senators there."

In addition to agriculture, Baker says he is interested "on a broad level" in housing and transportation. "As a developing state, housing and transportation is very important to us in Alabama."

Baker doesn't believe the Senate should ever deregulate gas prices.

"I personally doubt if we can ever afford deregulation. The laws of supply and demand don't work too good when we are in a critical shortage period. I don't know all the proposals before the Senate are, but I don't think we can afford the luxury of complete deregulation of prices."

About his campaign, Baker said, "I don't think you ever reach your expectations. At this time, I think it's quite obvious I am going to be a viable candidate and run a good race whether or not I make the run-off. I am satisfied at this stage."

Baker said his wife has given him her "100 percent backing." But, he said, "It's not an easy life for a family with children." Baker is married to Regena Holdbrooks and they have three small daughters, Gina, age 8; Ginger, 6; and Julie, 2.

Baker has found one advantage to running. "I think you probably keep up more," he said, "that's part of the campaign. It requires you to keep up in terms of issues, what's going on from a national standpoint."

by Betsy Butgereit



Stewart

Alabama is concerned and even unhappy with the leadership it has had in the past, says State Senator Donald Stewart, candidate for U.S. Senator.

"We've had a lot of talk and very little 'do'. The people are tired of politicians that show up kind of like flowers in the spring. And once they're in office, they do nothing about the state's problems."

Stewart was elected to the senate for district 20 in 1974 after serving four years in the House of Representatives. He is now waging his campaign from his hometown Anniston, where he is an attorney with the Stewart and Morris law firm.

In the senate, he was the chief sponsor of a bill establishing a Programmed Budgeting System for the state which allows for a balanced budget. He also pushed through a bill allocating funds for the Public Service Commission to hire expert witnesses to represent the "people's side of Alabama Power Co. debates."

Also, in the Spring session, Stewart sponsored a bill which is intended to give the Public Service Commission more power in negotiations. The bill, which passed the Senate, would establish a five-member board, as opposed to the present three-member one and would allow the commission more staffing. Stewart hopes to get the bill placed on the agenda of the special session this summer.

During his first year in the state senate, Stewart was named Outstanding Freshman Senator by the Alabama Press Association. In his hometown, Stewart is a member of the Civitans, is past president of the Anniston Jaycees, a member and Sunday School teacher at the First United Methodist Church.

He attended the University of Alabama and the UA Law School, graduating in 1965.

The 38-year-old Stewart is married to the former Priscilla (Lulu) Black of Tuscaloosa. They have a son, Taylor, 8, and a daughter, Priscilla, 11.

One key issue in Stewart's campaign concerns what he calls "giving the people a piece of the government," by avoiding special interests before and after elections. How does a politician avoid special interests? By telling them no, Stewart says. "One of the largest utilities in the state, or at least an executive of the utility, offered to raise money for me. And I simply said no.

"Instead you go to the people with your message and let them know.

"It's there, it's renewable. There are no wastes to worry about, no threat of catastrophic accidents. And what about nuclear waste? The government doesn't know what to do with it either and they'll admit it. I'm not necessarily opposed to nuclear energy. I believe in a mix. But, to say you don't

want any solar energy, which was being said not long ago at the national level, would be a mistake.

"This isn't a unique, radical view by any means. Harry Truman saw 21 percent of the nation's energy coming from solar energy by this point in time."

Stewart admits the cost of solar energy is "a little out of line now." He says it would cost about \$10 billion to develop solar energy on a national level, but asks, "How does this compare with the costs of importing oil?

"If the defense department bought into solar development, it would bring solar energy down to a competitive price," he suggests.

Senators and representatives often are faced with the question of voting their conscience or voting "the will of the people." Stewart said this is the most difficult question for any representative.

"I try to reflect the will of my people but there are conscience votes at times, like the question of Nixon's impeachment a few years back. If it's a matter of conscience and yet unpopular with constituents, then I think a representative ought to vote his conscience. After all, people send the representative because of his character, too, and this is when his character shows.

"Too many representatives vote to stay in office. You have to be open to the people, but there's no way you can take a vote back home everytime there a question in Congress."

Regarding humanitarian issues and social programs on the national level, Stewart says some programs need reaccessing.

"The government needs to take a good long look at its social programs. I'm not sure that they're doing what they should be doing. I don't think we need any more programs, we might need to cut back.

"Too much money is wasted in administrative costs and red tape at the national level. These programs need to be reaching the right people."

Stewart says a large portion of national expenditures are not producing anything. He also attributes federal deficit spending to waste in administrative costs and red tape.

"For example, at your hospital there in Lee County, 45 percent of the administration's time goes to filling out federal funds forms. Now, how does that help you if you go into that hospital? It does nothing but run the costs up."

Stewart says Alabama is going to make a change this year. "some people write off young candidates, I've had that to happen before, but we plan to win, that's why we're in the race."

by Jackie Romine





Stewart

a sail!

Thirty miles offshore the charter boat "Anastasia" pulls its baited lines through the purple waters of the Gulf of Mexico, heading southwesterly beneath an adult sun. Its twin diesel engines laboring and droning at trolling speed, the boat lumbers upon the six-foot seas. Flying fish buzz the crest of a large swell that breaks beneath the "Anastasia's" bow and sprays salt onto the deck and bridge. The spray disappears quickly, though, evaporated by the unyielding heat. On the bridge the captain, a portly, tanned fisherman wearing a golf shirt emblazoned with the name of his boat, chatters into a radio microphone. The CB radio crackles while the charter boat captains chat about last night's drunk, the seas, the catch and the seasick passengers. In the sickening stuffiness below deck five, freshwater fishermen from the Louisiana bayous now lie tormented, their stomachs turning in rebellion against the rising and falling of the boat upon the gulf. Ask the captain for a cure for seasickness: Tie some string around a piece of pork fat, swal-

low it and pull it back up. "Works ev'rytime," he says, chuckles and places another pinch of chewing tobacco in his mouth. While the captain sounds the 365-foot depths of Mingo Ridge, the curly-haired mate studies the trolling lines from the ladder leading to the bridge. Dark glasses shield his eyes; a fisherman's cross hangs from a chain around his neck. A few scars, wounds from fishes' bills, some still pink, mar his skin's swarthy smoothness. Later he tells of a fisherman in Mexico who was killed when a gaffed marlin buried its bill into the fisherman's brow.

The lines strung through the outrigger poles have been slack for hours, but the mate steadily watches the tension of the lines. Suddenly a reel's clicker screams its shrill warning. Down the steep ladder the mate bounds to slide the rod from its mount, the captain idles the engines, the passengers stumble onto the deck, momentarily ignoring their rebelling stomachs. "I see 'im right behind the bait!" the captain yells, "Has he hit it?" In reply the

rod bows. The mate jerks it back over his shoulder, setting the hook. A wan fisherman sitting in the fighting chair is handed the rod, and he struggles melodramatically to reel in the fish. Aft of the boat the tiring fish - a sail! - breaks the water in defiance, tugging her head against the line, flashing green in a twisting flight. But seconds later, coming nearer to the stern, she is gaffed aboard by the mate. "Jeeeeeesus! Just like 'American Sportsman'!" the fishfighter exclaims. More yells and whoops greet the sailfish as she is stuffed into the catchbox, her colors now dulling in death to drabness. With the closing of the catchbox lid the fleeting excitement ends. Then . . . the mate turns to rebait the hooks; the passengers rediscover the old treachery in their stomachs; and the captain - after announcing the catch over the CB - once again steers the "Anastasia" seaware into the ancient sun.

by Mark Willis



Burnt Out Belle In A Bar (or tribute to a veteran)

You wore your body like a medal of honor--
an attention getter,
a trend setter,
Inspiring lust or envy in all who saw it hanging upon you.

But now the bright ribbons have faded
the threads are worn and wrinkled
smooth bronze has dulled with age.

And who will buy you a drink for past glory?

Rick Harmon

MILLER'S POND



by Pat O'Connor

The autumn sun had begun to slip behind the topmost branches of the now darkening circle of mossy cypress trees as we picked our way around them to a rising clay bank about a quarter of a mile from where Daddy had parked the car. Though I couldn't see through the trees, I knew that behind them lay about four acres of slick, black Georgia water called Miller's Pond. A pine thicket sprang up eagerly on the bank, sparsely near the cypress, but thicker and darker on up the rise. A smooth blanket of wiregrass covered the earth where sunlight could break through the thick pine branches. Daddy picked a spot on the wiregrass between the pines and the cypress as Hatten and I slipped on around the circle of trees to a horseshoe-shaped clearing large enough for both of us to have clear shots at the ducks we sought.

Hatten took Daddy and me to Miller's Pond through experience. He had hunted ducks many times before and he claimed to have bagged several at the very spot where we were. Daddy, too, was an old hand at hunting, though he had not shot ducks a great deal. He had spent many a day in the woods following coveys of quail and squatting in corn fields shooting doves. I was thirteen years old then and, though I had been hunting a few times, was a somewhat uninitiated shooter. I had often tried to keep up with Daddy as he followed his bird dogs through the woods and I had even picked off one unlucky dove with my .410-gauge single shot. But the trip to Miller's Pond was different. I was ready for something new. I had just two weeks earlier received a well-worn Remington Model 56 twelve-gauge automatic shotgun for my birthday and it was the first time I had been hunting with it. The gun was a long-awaited gift from Daddy and I was eager to show him I could use it. It was also my first chance at bagging a duck and my thoughts raced wildly in anticipation as the afternoon sun crept further westward.

While we waited for the elusive wood ducks to leave some distant creek or river and streak homeward to the hidden circle of water which we guarded, I encountered mentally the ethics of killing nature's finest creations with cold, manufactured weapons. I took hunting as a serious challenge with unwritten rules by which I had to abide. I convinced myself that killing for food--killing an animal or bird with the intention of eating it--was acceptable and besides, it was fun.

Hatten woke me from my reverie. "Listen," he whispered, as he held out his hand in a gesture for me to be silent. I could hear a band of hounds baying in the distance, their sad wailing carrying down through myriads of trees to our small clearing. The sudden snap of Hatten's gun me-

chanism startled me. "They're after a deer, ... muttered quietly. "Reload with buckshot and get quiet."

I quickly injected three double-ought buckshot shells into my gun, shells I carried for such occasions. I had seen only three or four wild deer in my life and the thought of bringing home a big buck set my heart to thumping so that the blood pounded heavily in my ears. But the distant baying seemed to turn and then faded. Hatten calmly informed me that it was probably an old buck with a good nose. Hatten's explanations always seemed logical to me and though he was only four years my senior, I had a keen respect for his judgment.

Just as I switched back to number six shot, the ducks invaded the air over our clearing. Their shrill, urgent whistling preceded the squeeking of their wings. The noise from the bird's wings was a sound made by no other creature I had ever heard; it was not a flapping noise, but a strong, swift whipping sound of oily feathers being driven relentlessly against the duck's muscular body and the wind. As the first pair blasted over us at treetop level, I raised my gun. But raise my gun was all I did, for before I could pull the trigger, the birds had slipped over the wall of cypress trees and headed down to the black water. I realized then that I had little chance of hitting one. Hatten saw my plight and gave me a bit of instruction, "You'll have to lead them," he said with an amused look on his face. "Just listen for their whistle and get ready." Thanks a lot, I thought to myself.

The sky had become a streaked pink light against which the dark-bodied birds could be seen clearly as they flew over in groups of four and five. Lead pellets from our guns filled the air, but the ducks seemed to dodge the shots. Hatten was having fair luck, obviously, for he spent about as much time looking for dead or wounded birds as he did shooting. I was having no such luck. After firing almost two boxes of shells, I had not killed the first duck. I hadn't even brought feathers, a sure sign of a hit. Darkness was fast surrounding us and I knew my time to bag one of the swift birds was quickly running out. But my luck changed. From the darkness of the cypress trees sailed an apparently confused duck. I figured he was confused because he lit in a bush about three feet from me. In my startled haste to kill a duck, I took a hurried shot from the hip, but it proved to be useless. The nonchalant bird waddled out of the bush and started across the clearing. I flung down my gun and went after the duck. He made no efforts to fly and I caught him in the middle of the clearing, in full view of Hatten. But I figured it was dark enough that Hatten could not clearly see what was going on in front of him. "Finally got one, eh?" he asked as I picked up the duck.



"Yeah," I answered hurriedly, but I failed to mention the strange way that I caught the bird. I regained my position and gun and turned so that Hatten could not see what I was doing. The bird was a young drake, his tufted head a deep brownish-green pierced by black eyes that stared warily back at me. His body was warm and beautiful. The young bird slowly blinked his shining eyes as if to tell me he was unafraid. I decided that if I admired him any longer I would be forced to set him free. I snapped the bird's head against the cold steel of my gun barrel with a rapid wrist motion. The duck went limp and I stuffed his warm body into the game pouch on the back of my hunting jacket. Elation filled me but a strange sense of guilt invaded my thoughts, too.

The only remaining light came from a pale half moon and the stars. Daddy had joined Hatten on the other side of the clearing and I walked to where they waited. "How many did you get?" Daddy asked immediately.

"Just one," I declared. "And I got him at the last minute. If I had waited any longer I couldn't have seen him to shoot 'em. How many did you get?"

"I got four," Daddy said.

"Five," Hatten quietly added.

He began the walk back around the pond to the car. "You're really a big-time hunter now ain't you, son?" Daddy prodded. "Your little brother's gonna be mighty jealous of you."

"Yes, sir," I managed to say. Daddy's obvious pride in my first kill made my secret knowledge of how I got the bird grow to be a lump in my throat. Hatten wasn't saying a word. Then it hit me. Had Hatten seen the duck light in the bush? Surely not, he was across the clearing and it must have been too dark. Again my thoughts were racing. I wonder if he had seen me shoot at the bird while it was on the ground.

The remainder of the walk to the car was silent except for the sound of our boots brushing through the wiregrass, and it seemed like miles to me. I felt weak and wished I had freed the duck. I knew I had to make a decision and there was precious little time to weigh the problem and do something--the creeping fear that Hatten had seen the drama with the duck shouted from the back of my mind as I walked stiffly through the night air. Laughter from my elders would follow me forever if I told the truth I figured, but the scowl of my own conscience would last as long and be worse. The night was beautifully clear, but I wished it to be over; I wanted to be far away from the coldness of the truth, but there it stood and as we stepped onto the white sandiness of the short road back to the car, I broke through my fear.

"Daddy, uh, I didn't shoot the duck," I said in a whisper.

"What?"

"I said I didn't shoot the duck." I was beginning to get mad. I didn't know who I was mad at, but I felt like crying.

"Well then, how in the hell did you manage to get him?" Daddy shot back at me.

I shot at him and missed and then I just caught him." The words rushed from my mouth, but I caught myself. I noticed Hatten smiling.

"Wait a minute, wait a minute. Slow down," Daddy said. We were at the car and I was very close to crying.

A sudden movement in my game pouch interrupted me. I thought I was dreaming. The young duck stirred then, and just as suddenly as he had flown down next to me in the clearing, he popped out of my coat and sailed away. Up and over the pines he went, through the pale, clear November moonlight, out of my life and home to his black pond water. Daddy and Hatten stood open-mouthed as I cheered the bird on. I was saved.

I often slip back to Miller's Pond at dusk and wait for the ducks to come home. But nowadays, I wait so I can stand witness to their natural beauty and maybe catch a glimpse of a confused duck who taught me so much.



Big Jim's Son

His Last Name Isn't Folsom

by Jim Patton

Living somewhere in Alabama there is a 31-year-old man who has an almost-forgotten and tragic origin. Somewhere "Big" Jim Folsom's illegitimate son lives.

On March 3, 1948, *The New York Daily News* ran a front page story, complete with pictures, featuring the illegitimate son of the flamboyant, hard living Alabama Governor Folsom. At about the same time *The Birmingham News* splashed the same story across its front page.

Big Jim Folsom, the six foot, eight inch 'kissin' common man defeated the aristocrats and the "big Mule" industrialists to become governor of Alabama in 1946 and again in 1954. He sought proportional representation in the state legislature, and a populism free of racial slurs, some twenty years before it was fashionable or court-ordered to do so. Folsom is also credited for having taught the ropes of the complexities of politics to young George Wallace. Many people today remember the former governor for his drinking sprees, his grosser movements in public, and his ever-present campaign slogan, "Ya'll come!"

In 1951 an account of his son's birth appeared in *The American Mercury*. William Bradford Huie, now-famous Alabama author, wrote this account and he says that it has become a collector's

item. Huie also wrote a book, *Wolf Whistle and Other Stories*, published in 1959 which gives an account of the ill-timed birth.

Where is the son who received so much publicity so early in life? What has become of him?

The answers lie in the small, quiet north-Alabama town of Hanceville. That is where James Douglas Putman, bastard son of "Big" Jim Folsom, lives along with his pretty wife Sheila and their two sons, Jamie and Jeremy.

Putman is a tall man, six feet and five inches. He weighs 215 and his lanky body is muscular and well-proportioned. He has brown hair that always looks neat, but seldom seems combed. His blue eyes have a noticeable sparkle that magnifies when he smiles, and he always seems to be smiling. He remembers when he found out the details of his origin. He was 13 years old and living with his grandparents. He'll tell about it. "I got into an old trunk and found Mr. Huie's book. I read about my own birth. I felt deep shame as if the whole world had collapsed on me. I was hopeless."

He relates his story without animosity, without grudges. He finishes and then instead of a short, painful silence he breaks out that smile. His eyes sparkle.

That smile is the key to knowing Jim Putman. It is a confident, easy-going smile, the kind that immediately puts everyone at ease. It's the same kind you might see on a race-car driver's face

after a grueling victory, or the same kind a country boy might flash when he lands a 10-pound largemouth bass.

Putman is 100 percent country boy. His idea of a big time is strolling down to the Blue Hole--a natural swimming hole on the Warrior River--for some swimming, diving, fishing, and relaxing with nature. He tells about diving off the high cliffs of the Blue Hole, about taking twenty criminal boys, mostly black, to enjoy the rewards of the Blue Hole. His almost eternal smile falters a bit when he recalls the concern some of the people of Cullman County felt because blacks had entered their boundaries. His forehead wrinkles, his fists clench, and then he thinks back to the Blue Hole and the smile returns.

The Blue Hole is where Jimmy fell in love with life; it was at the Blue Hole that that smile came to be.

After discovering his origin, Putman copped out. He became the local "raise hell" leader. He traded in great promise as a football player for the less-respected ability of pool hustler. Ambitions gave way to what he termed "hanging loose."

He took uppers, referred to as bennies, because he hated to sleep.

He smoked dope. He recalls smoking a joint on the streets of Hanceville. Nothing was said because people had not been exposed to marijuana and did not recognize what it was.

He spent the night in jail nineteen times. His lifestyle was carefree, wild, and fun. The only problem was he did more frowning than smiling.

In June of 1968, Jimmy married an attractive brunette, Sheila Nelson. She married him against the advice of her relatives because for some odd reason, she remembers, she had faith in this good-time Charley named Putman.

"Jimmy was always a fun person to be around and I prayed that he would respond to the responsibility of marriage," Sheila says. She adds, "Jimmy has always had the ability to pick himself up--when things go wrong, or when he makes a mistake, he gets depressed for a while and then he gathers up the pieces and fights back to the top."

Sheila was a strong Christian and her husband, in the first years of their marriage, tested her faith many times.

Jimmy spent a lot of money on alcohol and tobacco even though he and Sheila were having a hard time financially. He had joined the Marines on the advice of a recruiter who had talked to him while he was spending one of his many nights in jail. During the early part of his marriage he was a drill instructor at Parris Island, South Carolina. He had already served one hitch in Viet Nam operating an ontos--a machine capable of sending 54,000 steel darts in every direction.

His teen-age habits of drinking, smoking, and gambling had continued while he was in "Nam" and now were threatening to break up his marriage.

He says he had known that he would cut out his habits if his wife had a child. They were blessed; she had one. He didn't cut his habits out though. One night he got drunk, gambled away some money, and finally topped off the night by throwing a military policeman through the backdoor of a bar.

He was busted from sergeant to private. He was going to be sent back to Southeast Asia. Given a leave before going overseas, he decided that he better really turn it out. He stayed out all night getting plastered and his wife finally courageously told him to pack his bags.

He packed.

One day while he was still on his pre-going-to-war leave, he walked up to the Blue Hole. He asked for Divine help and now says he was filled with a peace. Then he went to church and told everyone what had happened. Soon he was reunited with his wife.

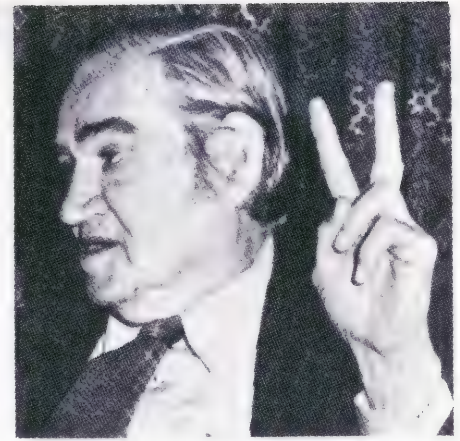
His life changed. When he got to California for final briefing before "Nam," he was told that he didn't have to go because the ontos, which he was trained to operate, was no longer being used. He was promoted back to sergeant. Instead of "the book being thrown at him," his case had been reconsidered and he had ended up with little more than slapped wrists.

He began to read the Bible, and Christianity became his driving force. He continued to have many trying struggles, but life had a sweeter fragrance. No longer would he run away from life, but would begin to live life, and he would smile.

Now Putman has a book written about him, *A New Life to Live*, written by Huie. It is the updated story of the one Huie began telling years ago. The cover of the book shows Putman standing with a black boy he met when he worked at the Boys Industrial School in Birmingham.

Putman went to work at this school shortly after leaving the Marines. It was here that he found his calling and developed an admirable reputation working with bad kids. He identifies with them. He relates to them. He loves them and he loves that type of work.

Putman has also distinguished himself by working in a group



Big Jim

home for "bad" juveniles in Oneonta, Alabama. The home is called The Glory House. It is considered by Putman, perhaps, the best such home in Alabama and is one of the most innovative anywhere. Twenty-five problem boys have been removed from jails to live in this home and only one has been returned.

Jimmy is presently trying to start a group home in Cullman County. Some people in the community are against this idea because it will mean more blacks. His telephone cable has been cut, and he's received numerous threats. Nevertheless, he'll keep on trying and he'll keep on smiling.

Occasionally he's bound to wonder about his mother, pretty Christine Johnston, who died when he was four and too young to remember anything except the funeral. Occasionally he'll still wonder why nobody told him about his origin. And occasionally he'll wonder what would have happened if he had taken Folsom as a last name instead of the name of his grandparents who reared him.

He'll wonder a lot about a lot of things. He says he'll wonder most about how to show people God's love and power, and then he smiles. It's a smile of contentment, a smile of peace within.

Arcenciel

by Johnny Williams

Had it not been for a piece of that luck without which even the resourceful and brave, at times, are lost, Dorsey might never have met I.T. As it invariably does, the stroke came precisely at the moment hindsight fixes as the nick of time, and deferred a Major Decision. For certainly no self-esteeming young man of ability and mettle, tender of heart, should ever be expected to stack boxes for more than six months. Dorsey, indeed, was in every way unequipped to do so. He had begun to entertain and dismiss possibilities, fearing only retrogradation. Every afternoon after work, he would cross the river and drive through town, always with a glance at the courthouse clock. He was mindful of all the other days like a procession of clock faces weaving away into the sky. Lady Luck came unannounced, sweet and smiling. From one of his acquaintances, whose well-placed uncle for any other purpose would in no way be, merely knowing the secretary, Dorsey learned that the local office of the Geological Survey had just lost its assistant, and presumably would be in need of another. The nephew knew nothing more, and so leaving a half hour early, Dorsey stopped by the office that very afternoon.

Only, it seemed less an office than a shed or garage—a pale-green concrete block structure with a flat roof. It stood at the end of a sand avenue, obscured by drooping ancient oaks, whose venerable limbs held Spanish moss hanging like stringy gray beards; and half-digested by one of those nameless, grasping vines that flourish through appearing poisonous. The small building looked like it belonged where it was: tucked just away from the somnolent mainstream of life in the central panhandle town of Serene, Florida.

Pulling up beside a pale-green government boat tilted on a block, Dorsey viewed the quiet scene curiously. So there are people, lives here, he mused, half-consciously tunneling through his memory for a stab of *deja vu*, some glimpse, some impulse of ancestral memory, as though in this way Destiny alluded to her intentions. An air conditioner rumbled from a window by the door. Hopeful, Dorsey entered. The office was vacant.

He closed the door quietly and stood waiting. The small rectangular room had little unused space. Three great wooden desks, two cluttered, one empty, stood along the left wall; two drafting tables with gooseneck lamps, piled high with a wide assortment of paraphernalia, appeared unserviceable along the right. There was a water cooler and a card table with coffee equipment. The walls were covered with maps, graphs, and charts, and on the back three or four mounted bass gaped silently. All very masculine and office-like, but not a soul to make use of it.

Dorsey was about to speak, but hesitated, eyeing for a moment a door at the back. Above the water cooler a round, efficient electric clock clicked away a minute: four twenty-five. The air conditioner hummed. Four twenty six. The door opened.

What emerged did so in something like stages, being obese, with a magazine in one hand, an empty coffee cup in the other. It fixed its eyes on Dorsey with a puzzled air.

"Hello," the figure said in a voice exaggerated, deliberate, deeply Southern. His age was difficult to guess, perhaps fifty. He was dressed in limp, hanging clothes: around the swelled midsection a narrow belt strained against its loops, the end curling like a tendril. His jowls drooped, darkened over with a five o'clock shadow. Old-fashioned eyeglasses seemed grown into the face, and Dorsey reflected that he would not take them off, but peel them.

"I can't say I know who you are and what you're here for," the man went on, smiling, "but I can tell you one thing—another minute or two and you'd have been out of luck, that's for sure!" He stood motionless, breathing a bit heavily for the exertion, staring at Dorsey evenly and wide-eyed. "I don't suppose there's many days you'd find me, or anybody else if you want to go that far, anywhere but on the way out at four-thirty. That's when I lock up!"

Dorsey returned the smile and answered, "I guess I'm in luck then."

"I'll say you are," the man replied, "but I hope you aren't needing anything too important." He turned and looked at the clock. It clicked. "Four-thirty on the button! I hope you're prepared to pay overtime!"

Stealing the pause, Dorsey asked about the job.

"Well," the man said, still not having moved, his corpulent arms hanging limply with their cargo at his sides. "You don't waste a minute, I'll say that for you. The other fella just walked out yesterday, and good riddance to him too, if you ask me. Never *did* work. He was a loafer and I told I.T. that the minute he walked through that door."

"Well, how do *I* look to you?" Dorsey asked.

The man kept on smiling. "Course, it's hard to say. But you look like you might do." He stepped up to Dorsey. "Let me feel that muscle—well! Not the biggest in the world, but you've worked a day or two is my guess."

With a smile at this unusual encouragement from this most unusual man, Dorsey answered, "I guess I've done a little. Can I fill out an application?"

The man stirred. "No harm in that, I suppose," he said, at length producing the item from a desk. "But for Pete's sake, don't fill it out here—it's quitting time. I'm going to supper! Tonight I get salad, perhaps two boiled eggs, and a lamb chop if Mother remembered. That's a *big* supper for me. I bet you wouldn't believe I've lost near seventy-five pounds in the last six months. It's my new diet. And it works too, I can tell you that! Why, people look at me now—ones who knew me before—and they say they can't believe it! Mother told me she

Winner Sigma Tau Delta Fiction contest

hardly recognized me any more. It's based on eggs."

"Eggs?"

"You know, those little round white things that come from chickens." This somehow failed to be offensive, lacking some touch. "I get seven a week—no more. At first I started out eating one every day, at supper. But I do it differently now. Somedays I won't eat a one, then eat two at once. Once I skipped four days and ate five on the fifth. Or perhaps I'll eat three one day, skip two days, then eat one a day for four straight days. Or eat two one day, skip a day, eat two more, skip another day, eat two more, skip a day, and eat one for Sunday dinner."

"Ever eat all seven at once?"

His features changed in no way. "No, I never am that hungry," he said brightly. "Before, I could sit down and eat a whole pie in two or three bites. But I could never do that now. I get water too—as much as I like. Some days I'll drink a gallon; others . . ."

"Shall I bring this back tomorrow?"

"The application? Yes—you'll have to see I.T."

"Who is I.T. anyway?"

"I.T.? I.T. Whaley. He's the boss if you want to call him that. Pure lazy if you ask me. Through and through." There was no vindictiveness in his tone. "You'd have to patch together a lot of minutes if you wanted to say he'd ever done a day's work, and I've been knowing him for twenty-two years!"

"Will he be here in the morning?"

"Sometime, though I won't be the one to say the exact minute. He's never been on time a day in his life before, and I don't expect he's planning to start now."

Dorsey nodded and turned for the door. "Okay—I'll be back tomorrow."

"Say, I hope you don't mind travelling."

"No—I like to travel."

"Well, that's a good start anyway. I.T. has to make field trips ever so often and you'll be going with him—if you get the job, that is. Twice a year, you go over to Arcenciel for river measurements."

"Where's that?"

"Clear over on the coast—on the Nassau River. I went one time and you won't catch me going back. Nothing but trouble from the minute we left: truck broke down and we had to wait in the sun for two hours. I had a Hershey bar in my pocket and it melted all over my pencil. When we finally got there, it was raining and we had to wait some more. Then I.T. got drunk and the next thing I knew he had some woman with him and he wouldn't even come to the door. You won't catch me going back, I can tell you that."

Dorsey laughed. "Sounds like fun to me. What's your name anyway?"

"Bennett—Bennett Rose."

"Dorsey Dubose." Dorsey shook the cool, puffy, egg-nourished hand, and feeling encouraged, though not through much confidence in Bennett Rose, stepped out into the damp heat of the afternoon and went home to his room in the fishing camp by the river.

* * * * *

It was with a certain measure of hope that Dorsey sat in thought that night on his porch. The winds of something new. The scent of change excited him, and he ruminated over the idea that a phase of his life had ended. This neat and warm in him, he gazed absently out through the trees at the wide river below, watching the slowly moving lights of a barge, its motor rumbling even and distant, as a light April breeze came across the water with an odor of oysters, fish, and gasoline.

Arcenciel. The word was on his mind. Already he had formed a mental picture: a small town with palm trees by the ocean, not dull and slow like Serene, but clean, bright, alive. It was places just like Arcenciel that he wanted to go to. He imagined himself there, as in a photograph, standing on the boardwalk in Arcenciel. But soon his mind drifted. The barge inched from his view and he saw the lights of a smaller boat creeping along the opposite shore. He reflected on the year he had been away from Tennessee: the jobs, the few people. And then, following its customary path, his mind burrowed deeper, touching the changeless images: his childhood—a house, a clover field, a honeysuckle vine along a fence, the little boy he loved more than anything else. He drifted from his reverie. Arcenciel. The same picture. He faltered, ill at ease in the future. His mind squirmed, and like a child returning to its dreams, settled itself back where it was warm and could rest.

He did not want to ask himself why he had come to Serene, for his reason, and there must have been one, was no longer quite clear. He was just here. I will be many places, he thought. He thought of his friends in Serene again. They were not much like him, half of them married, older than he, even with children; none of them planned ever to leave Serene. The ones who would leave were gone. The ones who remained lived and talked the moment. They knew nothing of his past. The thought depressed Dorsey. It depressed him as much as college, where he had spent a year as something of an alien. He had hated it. He had hated the feeling that it had all been done, said, catalogued before. And like all who have strong faith, he nursed a contempt for compromise, for concessions, for the opinions of a thousand different backgrounds, for the weak, polite complacency of "we can't know for sure." The familiar feeling of superiority rushed over him. He had his things. He had all his things. He had a sense of inexhaustibility, of endless resourcefulness.

The pride, as always, metamorphosed into yearning. It was a familiar sensation to Dorsey, one that was never far from him—like a tumor spread throughout his organs, exerting a constant sense of pressure. So this is my freedom? So this is . . . well what? So this is anything. I am young. Dorsey believed his longing was for experience, rich and varied, and he feared with cold, despairing sweat the sense of waste that at times oozed thick and rotten sweet like syrup into the void.

* * * * *

In the office the next morning, when Dorsey arrived, there was as yet no one likely to be I. T. Whaley, only Bennett rose and an elderly secretary busy at her desk.

"So there you are," Bennett announced. "Bright and early too!"

He introduced Dorsey to the amiable lady, who smiled and returned to her work.

"Ol Inez here is what keeps us running—anybody will tell you that," Bennett said, beaming at her oblivious side. "Been with us through thick and thin and never misses a lick. She does the reports and the time cards, except when she goes on vacation every year, and then I do em." Bennett bobbed his head, smiling. "It's a good thing, too; if you depended on I.T. for it you'd be waiting a pretty spell, I can tell you that. He's the boss all right, but there's a thing or two goes on here he don't know about. Inez'll back me up there, won't you Inez?"

"Mm-mmm," Inez allowed absently, busy in a bulky file.

Dorsey took a chair and attended to Bennett curiously, who at length walked over the water cooler and drank four cupfuls.

"You've probably never seen anybody drink as much water as me before," he said. "Some days I drink two gallons, Inez'll tell you that."

Dorsey nodded. The briskness of morning lay on the air, with the smell of coffee. Inez began typing. Bennett, after a few further observations, found his way to his desk and began unfolding a graph sheet that besides the lamp and a few pencils was the sole item there. Dorsey look out the window, studied the maps, watched the electric clock click away its minutes, but soon his eyes returned to Bennett, who opened a drawer and took out a curious gadget. He plugged it in, as Dorsey watched, and applied it to the graph paper. Though he had never before heard or dreamt of one, Dorsey saw that it could be nothing other than an electric eraser. Bennett began systematically erasing the endless curving line, his pudgy fingers vibrating as the little device buzzed along. In this way, five minutes passed. Then the front door swung open.

"Good morning girls," the newcomer saluted. "It's a beautiful day in Chicago."

Dorsey turned. This, he knew at once, this fiftyish, droopy-eyed character, face deeply-lined, hair extravagantly combed, paunchy at the waist and dressed in khaki—this could be none other than I. T. Whaley.

"A lovely, lovely, *lovely* day in Chicago."

"Well, well," Bennett observed from his spot by the back wall. "I see you decided to come in after all. Late as usual. Inez ought to dock you fifteen minutes on your time card." The smile never vanished from the face.

"Ho now, Ben, watch out," said I.T., as Inez accosted him with some detail which he dispensed with peremptorily and walked to his desk.

"Birds singing, flowers blooming—lovely day—Lord help us, ought to be out looking for old Fred."

He laid his briefcase on his cluttered desk, ignoring Dorsey but for an initial glance, and helped himself to a cup of coffee. As he was stirring, Bennett told him of Dorsey's object.

"Goodness gracious girls," said I.T., bringing his attention at last around to Dorsey. "One goes out the back door, and here comes another one in through the front." The forlorn eyes inspected him. "Young one too." The old and the young introduced themselves. "Don't even give me time to look."

Dorsey told him about the uncle.

"Yo," said I.T., "and so here you are, hot as a boy dog, and mean as a snake. You like to work?"

"No sir," Dorsey said on an impulse.

"You're hired," answered I.T. without so much as shifting a wrinkle on his face. "Let me feel that muscle."

The grip was firmer this time. "Holy moly, children, this one's a *girl* I believe. They don't make em like they used to. When I was your age I could bite a tenpenny nail in half."

"I prefer bolts," Dorsey said, lightly.

An I.T. eyebrow raised. He sized up Dorsey for a moment, and then smiled. "Everybody's different," he said.

I.T. was not much for details. He gave the most cursory of glances to Dorsey's application, and asked a few questions. "I hope you don't mind travelling," he said finally.

"No—actually I like to travel."

I.T. grinned. "Cheap motels, T.V., catfish and hushpuppies. It all gets to be the same after a while. I never knew anybody didn't get sick of it."

Dorsey shrugged. "It beats a lot of things."

I.T. inspected Dorsey with interest and amusement, and Dorsey, seeing the wry smile on his face and feeling that he appeared ridiculous, was irritated.

"Just tell me one thing," said I.T. "What brings you from Tennessee to Serene, Florida? You got friends down here?"

"No sir."

"Just passing through." I.T. watched Dorsey closely.

"No sir," Dorsey said, "not exactly. I'm just here."

"And you're going to work six months and run off."

"I don't plan to."

"But you will," I.T. said. "But it don't matter. There'll be another one. That's just the way it goes—first your money, then your clothes."

"Just make sure I'm gone before you sign the papers."

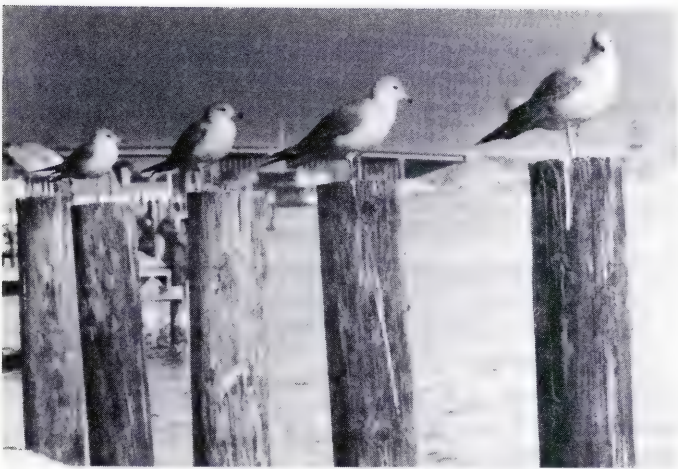
I.T. nodded his head and ran a tanned hand over his freshly-shaven face. He leaned back in his chair and propped his feet on his desk, cradling his head in his hands. "Yo. We'll keep your chair warm."

Dorsey went on to work, late, with I.T. in his head. He didn't know what to make of him. There was something about him that seemed very familiar, as if he had seen him in an old photograph: three or four young men standing around a warplane; I.T. in the foreground, the face smooth and stretched into a grin, cap tipped back on his head. It seemed that he had seen that very picture on some wall somewhere. Dorsey shook his head, not knowing what to think.

* * * * *

It was a matter of absorption that over the first week or so Dorsey learned his duties, which were for the most part tedious record-keeping that no one could find the energy to explain but in spurts, and it was not with surprise that he realized, before long, that he was infinitely more useful than Bennett Rose. Not that he cared, or even, after a short period of time, thought of the matter, as by degrees Bennett became less and less able to impose upon him. Bennett's duties seemed not to exist, and he applied himself to them with appropriate industry. I. T. lived up to Dorsey's expectations in proving himself indisposed to

dwell on matters pertaining to work in his thoughts or conversation, the former presumably, the latter clearly devoted wholly to money, fishing, and women. When I.T. was occupied, it was a source of endless amazement to Dorsey that he managed to be so without exertion, poising himself over something, peering at it, contemplating it, screwing up his eyes at it, cussing it, but never doing it. He often disappeared for long stretches of the afternoons, always returning before quitting time, which for him was around four o'clock. He would pack up his briefcase, slap his hand on the top of it, and announce that he was going "to catch up on his love life," or "to look for old Fred." Inez did most of the work, and happily. Ever amiable and distant, with a countenance never tense, never repining, rarely fatigued, she kept a continual flow of material passing through her hands. It was only on rare instances that she found herself with nothing to do, and at these times Dorsey observed



in her face a nervous discomposure, an almost panicky sense of impasse, that made him quite uneasy. They left one another alone.

Among Inez's responsibilities was the preparation of the travel orders, which she did for I.T. and Dorsey at the end of Dorsey's second week, a bright morning in early May. They were going to Panama City to pick up gauge charts and to collect water samples. They would be gone one night.

"It's a beautiful day in Chicago," I.T. declared. They loaded the truck.

"Keep a close eye on him," Bennett warned Dorsey. "He'll make you do all the work if you'll let him."

"Look out Ben," said I.T.

"He can't do that," Dorsey replied. "I don't know what to do."

"You'll be simply *amazed* at how fast you learn," I.T. prophesied.

The courthouse clock said eight o'clock as they waited at the red light. Another minute and they were out of town and on the highway.

The cab of the truck was silent for a while as the scrubby, monotonous Florida terrain drifted slowly by. Dorsey and I.T. were still somewhat strangers to one another, even though their relationship was relaxed, having reached a point of

friendly mutual antagonism. Dorsey still had not evaluated fully his lethargic, epigrammatic boss, with whom he was, on this trip, alone for the first time. He enjoyed I.T.'s company, but felt as unlike him as any human being could possibly be. Their conversation, what little there was for the first few miles, was desultory.

But shortly, the confinement of the truck cab had an effect. Their talk drifted towards the personal. Dorsey learned that I.T.'s wife had been dead for five years, and that their oldest son had gone to Canada eight years before to escape the war, and had not been back.

"We never did really get on together," I.T. said. "He was just a rascal from the time he could fart on purpose. He was going his way, that's all there was to it, and there wasn't a damn thing old Dad could do about it."

"Sounds like maybe a chip of the old block," Dorsey said jokingly.

I. T. side-eyed him. "You done figured out *I'm* the rascal, huh?"

Dorsey shrugged. "Probably not too bad a guess."

I.T. turned back to his driving with a sigh. "I never did have any trouble having a good time," he said, and his features hardened a little. "But we're different. He's hard—I don't know where he got it—picked it up from his crowd, I guess. When his momma got sick, he wouldn't come home. I got in touch with him, told him she was dying, and he said he couldn't do it. Me, I wouldn't never do something like that. I took care of *my* momma for eight years before she died. I wouldn't have turned my back on her for any reason as long as I was breathing. Not my mother."

"How could he come? If he'd gotten caught he'd had to gone to jail, wouldn't he?"

"What difference does that make? His momma was on her death bed. She died wondering whether or not her own son hated her. She believed he did—and I never was too sure she wasn't right. It was hard on her. It was hard on *everybody*. And there wasn't nothing I could do—nothing at all. She was a little woman—frail. Not just in her body, but in the way she was." I.T. shook his head resignedly. "It didn't take much to hurt her."

Dorsey felt a little ashamed. "You really loved her."

"Yep, I did. But, as they say, that's just the way it goes."

They were silent a moment.

"She was an Eye-talian. Did you know that?"

"No."

"Well she was. I found her in Rome when I was in the service. I never *will* forget it." He looked over at Dorsey. "You been in love yet?"

"No."

"You will be." I.T.'s tone became fond. "You won't know what hit you, boy. It makes you crazy—it makes you *sick*. You don't see nothing, you don't hear nothing, you don't think nothing, but *it*—that woman. You hurt all over and you got to have it. It's the reason we're here on this earth, I do believe. I won't never forget mine, no sir. It was just after the war. I brought her home with me—she was living with her aunt, didn't have a family, poor as a mouse—and I married her. I didn't know much Eye-talian, and she didn't know a lick of

English, but she worked at it. Went to school. She never was a *master* at it, but she spoke it as good as me." I.T. laughed. "And she always kept a job."

"Sounds like a fine woman."

"What you talking about. Son, I had a 24 inch T.V., a Buick, and a wife, and they all worked. I had it made."

Dorsey laughed. "You ever write your son?" he said.

"I don't know where he is anymore."

"One day there he'll be on your doorstep, asking for forgiveness."

I.T. frowned with a curt shake of his head. "Nope. He won't never be back. I wouldn't take him anyway."

"I bet you would."

"Well. It don't matter. He won't *be* back." I.T. squinted through his sunglasses at the highway. "Just remember one thing: don't ever turn your back on your family. That ain't what you did, is it?"

"No—not like that. I just left school. I got sick of it. They didn't like it, but I just did what I wanted to."

"Must be nice," said I.T. "But just don't ever do it. People do it, too—all the time. And when they do, it's hard as hell to go back. And it keeps getting harder. Hell son, in this great big beautiful world, a family is all you got. That's it. You lose your family and there ain't nothing left to lose."

Dorsey looked at I.T. He didn't answer.

"Well maybe," I.T. said, "it was just that Eye-talian blood in him."

"Yeah, maybe so."

They rode for a while leaving the conversation at this point. The flat landscape grew tiresome. I.T. had one hand on the wheel, and his head tilted as he squinted through his sunglasses silently. Dorsey sat slumped in the seat with his feet against the dash.

"Bennett said he wouldn't ever go on another trip," Dorsey said, breaking the silence, staring out the window.

I.T. chuckled. "Old Ben."

"What's his problem anyway?"

"We-e-ll," I.T. answered dissuasively. "You got to remember I been knowing Ben for years and years. He's a little pesky sometimes, but he don't hurt a soul. He does all right."

"You never pay any attention to him."

I.T. nodded. "I don't have to. We've been right there in the same room together for twenty some odd years. I don't bear him any ill will at all. That ain't easy to do. There ain't many folks you could say that about."

Dorsey thought about this a minute.

"Thing about Ben is, he's like a child," I.T. went on.

"Lives with his mother still?"

"Yep. That, but he never has got out and and gone anywhere or seen anything in his whole life—he ain't like you. Course, he's cheap too. Goodness *gracious*, that man holds on to a buck—till the eagle screams. I'd hate to be the one to pry his fingers off a penny if he happened to die with one in his hand."

"What's he *do* anyway?" Dorsey asked.

"You've seen it—don't ask me."

"That's really it? Nothing?"

"About as close to it as you can get."

Dorsey screwed up his features scornfully. "But, my God,

how can he just do nothing? How does he keep his job?"

"The U.S. Gover-ment."

"The Government?"

"That's who we're working for, you know. Uncle Sambo. Don't nobody hand it out like him."

"And take it."

"Shoo," I.T. dismissed the idea. "How much they ever took from you?"

"A nice hunk out of every check I've ever gotten."

"And you don't drive on the highways? Go camping and fishing out in the parks? Say anything you want to, think anything you want to, do anything you want to? Shoot. A young pup like you up and decides that he's a little tired of books and Fate has called him to the lovely, sweet-smelling banks of the Apalachicola River in bee-you-tee-ful Serene, Florida where he can sit around under the trees and sip on a beer and contemplate the rain and everything's lovely, and up he goes and does it. And when he gets there the Government gives him a job so he can eat—without asking no questions. How could somebody like that mean-mouth the Gover-ment?"

"You look at the bright side of things, I'll say that for you. And while you and me are out working our asses off, paying taxes, we're just paying all the rich people's way. And it just keeps going on and on."

"Lord, you don't worry about things like that, do you?" I.T. said. "Just be glad you ain't in China, son." He shook his head. "When I was your age, I was in the army. There was a colonel I drove for—finest man I've ever known. To this day I've never met a man who was as gentle-tempered, as fair, and as smart as him. Sharp as a tack. And he knew a joke when he heard one, too. We got on pretty good. I used to try to tell him how to run the army, and he always told me the same thing: Whaley, the trouble with you is, you just can't see the Big Picture." I.T. chuckled. "The Big Picture. That's the trouble with you: you just can't see the Big Picture."

Dorsey protested, "What *is* the Big Picture?"

I.T. sighed patiently. "When you see it, you'll know it."

"I don't know what you're talking about."

"Well anyway, the thing about Ben is, what would he do if the Gover-ment didn't keep him alive? What could he do?"

"That's not the Government's problem."

"Well, it may not be their problem directly, but who grudges Ben? What about you? You ain't killed yourself, you know. You really think you're worth what they pay you?"

"Do you?"

"Nope."

With a frown, Dorsey said, "I earn my money just sitting around bored out of my mind all day."

"So does Ben—except he ain't bored. Maybe that's what you don't like about him."

"Wait a minute. I didn't say I didn't like him. As a matter of fact, I *do* like him. Sort of."

"That's what I'm talking about."

"If he'd just shut up sometimes."

"He *will* talk to you, no doubt about it. But let me tell you a secret about Ben, and you don't need to go telling everybody. He had a twin brother."

"*Two* of them?"

"Yep. But when they were boys, he drowned. Their daddy too. They were out on the river, fishing. Another boat picked Ben up, but it was too late for his brother and his daddy. Course that's been years ago, but Ben is still afraid of water to this day. Won't go anywhere near it."

Dorsey listened.

"Now I ain't saying anybody *owes* Ben on account of that, but don't it make you think twice? Ben supports his mother. You can understand why they're close like they are. Now what would they do if there wasn't no Government to take care of them?"

"Get another job."

"And do the same thing."

Dorsey stared out the side window. "I don't know," he said. He was silent for a minute. "That's a bad experience," he added at length. But he was not awed by the story; something bothered him. Maybe, he thought, getting old is just the ability to explain anything—not to account for it or understand it, but simply to accommodate it into all the rest of the debris flowing along with the current, one way or another.

"I think I'm beginning to understand Government work," he said.

"It's all in the Big Picture," I.T. returned.

As they reached the outskirts of town, they stopped in at a Sambo's for a cup of coffee.

* * * * *

Dorsey was not much surprised to find that he rather liked the field work. It was not strenuous or hectic—if anything, boring in its simplicity and sameness, but this was compensated by the fact that they were on the move—seeing new places, changing, unconfined. Time seemed of little consequence.

They visited several points along the bay, collecting charts from gauging stations, until it was time for lunch. They ate and checked into their motel. "Take an hour," I.T. said with a yawn and disappeared into his room for that amount of time.

They drove down to Port St. Joe that afternoon and collected some more charts, then up to an obscure point on the Apalachicola River where they took some water and riverbed samples. It was after five o'clock when they got back to the motel.

The Seafood Platter was just down the beach, and it was there that they installed themselves for dinner. I.T. ordered catfish and hushpuppies, Dorsey shrimp. They had a beer as they waited.

"Well," said I.T. offhandedly, "what do you suppose you'll end up doing? You reckon you'll ever amount to anything?"

With a grin, Dorsey answered, "I doubt it. How about you?"

"Oh goodness gracious girls, it's too late for me."

"I don't know. I guess I'll *work* like everybody else," Dorsey said.

I.T. ignored or missed his tone. "Yep," he said, and exhaled his breath through compressed lips, looking beyond Dorsey absently with his forlorn eyes. "Sad fact. Everybody's got to work," he said quaintly.

"I'd like to be my own boss."

"That can be tough on a good man."

"Well I'm not looking for a free ride."

"Best way sometimes."

"When?"

I.T. laughed, shaking his head. "The Big Picture. You ain't looking at the Big Picture. Don't you want to do the things you want to do, or do you want a heart attack when you're forty-five? There ain't a whole lot of time to go around, let alone extra. There's a lot to be said for clocking in and clocking out. You got to leave it at the office. Shoot. Don't you like to go fishing and drinking and grow tomatoes and cucumbers and pole beans, son? Man's his own boss can forget those things. He's too busy worrying. Stays with him all the time, it don't matter where he is—money, bills, beating the other guy."

"You left out watching *Police Story* and working the crossword puzzle," Dorsey said. "Besides, there's nothing wrong with having your mind occupied. It's either that or *be* a cauliflower."

"Oh it's fine to have your mind occupied all right—when it's something worthwhile. Some folks think about religion all the time—which is fine, long as they leave me alone. Now me, I still think about that good stuff every day. *All* the time. I ain't ever got tired of it yet."

"I'm sure that's true," Dorsey said. "You're a dirty old man—a real one."

"You got it." I.T. was silent for a moment, staring away across the room with a smile on his weathered face.

"What are you thinking about, dirty old man?"

"I just told you."

"Oh, God."

"No—matter of fact I was thinking about you. I've done figured out what's wrong with you."

"Who said anything was wrong with me?"

"I did. What you need is something different to think about besides all this crap. There's somebody I want you to meet

chill factor

when the moon hangs over the mountain
and the tramontanes begin to howl,
the tower bell's twelve tellers
are the last twinges of speech we hear
descending to the floor of sleep.
by morning the baby grand will be missing
and your hands will lie on the sheet
like two pale fish beached
in the night's sudden storm.

although i am captured by the crossfire of love
and my mouth departs on mute safari
across your skin as smooth as glass,
the distances behind your eyes
remain as unknown to me
as the spaces between the stars.

A.J. Wright

when we go to Arcenciel."

"I'm not interested."

"Yes you are."

"You were asking me what I was going to do, remember?"

"Yep. You figured it out yet?"

"The trick is to *like* what you do for a living. That way it's *good* to have it on your mind. If it was something you enjoyed, you'd love to think about it, worry about it, and plan and hope and all that."

"Gracious heavens, where you going to find something like that? There *ain't* nothing. Why do you suppose folks get *paid* for working?"

Dorsey frowned. "I just don't understand you. I can think of a lot of things. What I'd like is a store: arts and crafts and different things. I'd start out little—I do leatherwork, and I paint and I know about cabinet-making from my daddy. I'm good at making things. The thing is though, I'd buy other people's stuff, and when I got big, the best artists in the country would sell through me. Maybe I'll have a chain or something. People will know about my store like a good restaurant and come from all over. And I'd do my own stuff in my spare time. Jewelry and bamboo furniture—all that stuff is big now. People will pay anything," Dorsey ended excitedly.

"That's just because they ain't got nothing to do but throw away money on junk. They feel like they're supposed to. I suppose you'd milk em dry?"

"It's not 'junk' and no, I wouldn't 'milk em dry.' I wouldn't be in it for the money."

"But if you made a bundle, that'd be okay?"

Dorsey shrugged. "At least I'd know what to do with it if I had it. I'd use it right."

"Anybody can spend money, child. Lord. And you the one complaining this morning about rich folks getting richer and you and me having to work."

"I didn't say I wouldn't work if I had money. It wouldn't make any difference."

I.T. took a drink of beer and smacked his lips. "The way it sounds to me, you wouldn't be in any danger of getting rich with something like that *anyway*. Goodness gracious how young folks think alike. My brother has a ranch going in Colorado. He got started back in the early fifties. He got lucky—*damned* lucky. One of his Navy buddies had a daddy that owned all this land out there. Wiley came home with him after the war and went to work for his daddy for about five years. Learned the business. Then the old man put up a piece of it for sale and wanted Wiley to buy it. They'd gotten real thick. Well, Wiley came to see me and wanted me to go in with him—half and half. The thing was, Wiley had been getting into one thing after another the whole time we were growing up—even while he was in the Navy—one thing after another. He was just that way. But they *always* busted. Hell, I was married and had two kids—we were in Jacksonville. I had a good Government job, liked where I was, so I stayed. He went on and on, but I wasn't about to pick up and go into debt for the rest of my life to move out to Colorado to shovel horse shit. Course he said it was foolproof, the chance of a lifetime and all that. We'd get up the money and do it together." I.T. heaved a sigh. "Told him no thanks. I'd heard that music before."



Photo by Mark Willis

"Well? What happened?"

"He got the money up some way his self. He's a millionaire now, or close to it."

"Oh my God."

I.T. grinned. "I know what you're thinking, but I ain't hurting. And I still ain't so sure I didn't do the right thing. Wiley just got lucky—you can't tell nothing from that. Like I always say: that's just the way it goes."

"First your money, then your clothes."

"There you go."

"So that was that," Dorsey said. "Opportunity knocked and you were out to lunch."

"Well, yes and no. Right after my wife died—five years ago—he made me another offer. Offered to let me buy in with him, work my way up."

"And you didn't do it?"

I.T. finished his beer. "Well as far as I know, the offer still stands. I told him no, because I like it where I am. I didn't want to go changing horses in midstream. Hell, I'm too old. I'm fifty-four."

"And standing no chance of a heart attack."

"I hope not. You got to re-lax. That's the secret—the oldest one in the world."

A little flush of excitement rippled through Dorsey. He sensed regret in the air around I.T. "Why don't you do it *now*? What's there to stop you?"

"Aw, goodness gracious child, I got it made. Things are fine just the way they are. Let sleeping dogs lie."

"Because you'd have to work." I.T. didn't respond. "Have you ever been to Colorado?"

"Oh yeah. Pretty country."

"It's beautiful out there and you know it. And they do have fish you know."

"Yeah, but it ain't the same. There's a big ol bass about as old as I am and damn near as smart in Lake Comer that I've been trying to catch for fifteen years. Had him on three times—lost him every time. The last time, we looked each other right in the eye, and I told him he was mine. Sooner or later, if it *killed* me, I was gone catch his ass. I'm still trying."

Grimacing, Dorsey said, "That's nothing. Probably three different fish anyway."

"Nope—it was the same one. Fred Mertz."

"What?"

"That's what I named him. Cause that's who he looks like and acts like." He chuckled. "Old Fred."

"Man this is just crazy," Dorsey complained. "If I were you I'd get up right now and drive back to Serene and load up and leave tonight. I've been thinking about going out west myself—for a little while anyway. Colorado sounds good. You could give me a job."

I.T. laughed. "Get on out of here. Damn that young brain of yours—I can hear the gears turning clean over here."

"Why don't you *do* it?"

"I'm too old."

"You're just making excuses. You're just afraid. How many people get an opportunity like this? You ought to be glad you've still got a chance to do it."

"Oh, go on," said I.T.

The waitress arrived with the food. Dorsey tried to interpret the expression on I.T.'s face as they ate. He could tell nothing. He felt impatient and frustrated and curious. How could he not do it?

* * * * *

Dorsey refused to let the subject die during the next month, though he knew he was beginning to rub against I.T.'s grain. The idea of going to Colorado to be a ranchhand excited him mightily. And he also liked the idea of going with I.T. The fact was, he enjoyed I.T.; he enjoyed chafing him and being chafed. He enjoyed the honesty of their relationship. But he was irritated at times to rage by I.T.'s noncommittal nature, by his homey complacency. The tedious office work wore on; they went on a few more trips, and gradually, in the face of I.T.'s refusal to take him seriously, Dorsey had no choice but to let the subject drop. But not before he had extracted from I.T. a promise to consider the matter seriously. Dorsey believed him.

Spring became summer overnight, as it is wont to do in that climate; the days grew oppressively hot, but most of them were otherwise beautiful: deep blue sky with slowly drifting clouds, everything green and heavy, blooming into rich, indolent beauty like a bored young girl. The nights were cooler, but not

much, thick with mosquitoes and flies, viscous, slow, yet not without their charm as well. A sweet scent filled the air, and often, on his porch, Dorsey imagined he could just hear the waves breaking on the beach away to the south. June vanished: July wore on, and little occurred to break the routine of the office: the assiduity of Inez, the placid imperturbability of Bennett, the durability of I.T.

Dorsey grew increasingly restless as the long, heavy days passed. Time seemed slowed down, as if the hands of the clock were mired in the syrupy air. He found himself looking forward to the Arcenciel trip anxiously, and that event became something of a landmark, an emblem in his mind. It was the closest peak, the one that, though less imposing, eclipses the view of those more distant. In the office, Dorsey became more and more aware that he was marking time, and that he was a slave of the electric clock and its neat dissections of the days. His anticipation of Arcenciel was his balm, and it overshadowed the Colorado affair to such a degree that at times the latter idea appeared to him ridiculous, a flight of fancy, nothing more. With the passing of the moment of passionate conception, as often happens, the promise faded too. This secretly angered Dorsey, and everywhere he looked he found support, that such feeble hope, such surrender, such pining resistance to change should not only exist but flourish among men. I can't be drug down with all this, he thought.

Bennett's vacation came up in August. He had no plans of leaving Serene, but he would be away from the office for two weeks. On his last day, a Friday, a little before quitting time, Dorsey came and sat down beside his desk.

"What are you going to do, Bennett?" he asked. "Go to Hawaii?"

"If I had the money to throw away like water, maybe," Bennett replied. "You won't catch me doing anything foolish like that."

"Well how about New Orleans? Wouldn't you like to get out of Serene?"

"I can't see any reason to."

"But what are you going to *do*?"

Bennett bobbed his head defiantly. "Mother's got a few things for me, you can be sure of that. I'm going to wash and wax the car tomorrow."

"I tell you what, Bennett. I know what you can do. You'll have a good time."

"I doubt it. What?"

"Go to Arcenciel next week with me and I.T. We'll have loads of fun."

"No thank you. Not me. I've had my share. You won't catch me going on any more *trips*."

"Not ever?"

"No sir—and you can go to the bank with that," Bennett said with a bob of his head.

"You just don't like to travel, huh?"

"Nope—never have. Some folks do, I'm sure. But not me. For my money, I'll stay put. And if you're smart, you will too. There ain't nothing *there* that ain't *here*. And if there is, I don't care for it."

"Well, at least you sound like you're sure about it," Dorsey said with a laugh. "You reckon you'll ever get old, Bennett?"

"Well I don't suppose anybody's getting any younger."

"What are you going to do? If you do get old, that is."

"Same thing I'm doing now—old or not. I've got the best retirement program a fellow can get. At least I won't be out begging, I can promise you that."

Dorsey sighed. "I won't stand in your way, Bennett."

Bennett nodded. "I hope not. Because there's three hundred pounds of me, you know."

"That reminds me. I've been meaning to ask you something, Bennett. Have you really lost all that weight you say you have?"

"You'd better believe it," Bennett answered emphatically. "Eighty-eight pounds! You can ask anybody. Folks who knew me before say they can't believe it."

"It is amazing," said Dorsey.

"It's the eggs. Seven a week. And water—you've got to drink lots of water." Bennett bobbed his head. "You'll do well to remember it."

"I'm sure," Dorsey said, "that I will never forget it."

* * * * *

Dorsey was eager when the day arrived. At last he was going to Arcenciel. I. T. came early and they loaded the truck. Inez typed up the papers, and just before eight, by the courthouse clock, they headed east out of town.

To a Woman--What I Should Have Said But Was Too Drunk, and Cried Instead (or fight in a car)

Tell me about women's lib,
When I'm chained to your heart
and you're so glib each time we meet.
And you're driving away with Pat or Mike,
Watching those chains drag me off of my feet.
Tell me about it.

Tell me why if I'm your best friend,
you always step on my heart
to see it bend, before it cracks.
Why must you use your charms on me
like a torturer uses thumbscrews or racks.
Tell me about that.

Better yet, just shut up and drive.

E.M. Teas

From The Ashes

In the bleakness before their beginning
they sat in a drizzling rain
and looked down the long beach
at distant fires capturing their eyes.
The sad swaying of the sea oats
and the low bowing of the sea grapes
made them huddle closer in the drizzle.
Softly a gull glided down
onto the soft grey sand before them,
and then another joined it
that had seemed to arrive from another direction.
Suddenly together they saw the gulls together
rising as if from their own grey ashes and flying
straight down the long beach toward the fires.

Fred Donovan Hill

It was a six hour drive. They stopped twice for coffee. They talked little the entire trip, neither of them feeling very gregarious. For most of it, Dorsey sat reading, and even took a long nap. It was midafternoon when they passed the eastern city limits sign, and were welcomed to Arcenciel.

"Here we are girls," I.T. announced.

"Is this it?"

"The big city of."

It was quite a small town. They drove down the main boulevard, a street divided by a narrow strip of carefully tended turf, where azaleas and roses and a few palm trees grew neatly. There was a hamburger stand, and a few gas stations, a small shopping center, a library, a small medical clinic, some rather quaint houses, and little else. At the end of the boulevard, they passed through the downtown area, with its sparse, loitering life. Beyond this was the river where a long, arching steel bridge spanned the waterway majestically. At its edge, and set back from the road, the Rainbow Courts was situated. I.T. pulled the truck in and parked.

The building was not new; there were about twenty units, arranged in an open V; in the middle was a small office. They went inside.

The room was cooled by an air conditioner that hummed quietly. An old man sat behind a desk, watching a color television. An old lady stood doing nothing in the middle of the floor.

"Howdy," I.T. said. "The G-men are back."

The old man got to his feet, a blank expression on his face. He inspected Dorsey dourly. "Two?"

"Yes sir."

"Nine-fifty each."

The rooms were no more amicable. In Dorsey's, the furnishings—an old, severe bed, an armchair, and a bulky dresser with a mirror, cracked and taped—almost completely filled the space. The walls were papered with faded yellow, peeling in places. The ancient air conditioner seemed not to work, until Dorsey finally figured out its secret, and even then it groaned reluctantly, sending out the faintest current of

coolish air. He threw his suitcase on the bed and stood sweating before the mirror. He was reminded of his grandmother's back bedroom in Tennessee, where she had read the Bible to him as a child.

"How do you like the Arcenciel Hilton?" I.T. inquired when they met outside.

Dorsey was vexed. "Depressing," he said.

"But cheap."

They took a stream measurement that afternoon and called it a day. Dorsey dreaded going back to the small room; as always under such circumstances, the gloom seemed not momentary, but permanent, as though in its immediate, barren, sleeping soil, there was no nourishment for any future or change to grow.

There was a small restaurant behind the motel, and it was there they went for dinner. To Dorsey's surprise, the food was very good. There was a salad bar with an astonishing variety of appetizers, relishes, raw fruits and vegetables. Dorsey carefully put together an amalgamation of it all. I.T. evinced himself particularly fond of the pickled peppers.

"Where's Laddie?" he asked a passing waitress.

"She's off tonight—she'll be in tomorrow."

After they had eaten, Dorsey went to his room and read for a while, but could not keep his thoughts from straying from the page. He tried the television for a while, but grew bored. At eleven o'clock, nervously unsleepy, he went to bed. "What am I doing here?" he wondered as he lay uncomfortably in the quiet, hot air. "What am I doing?" He lay awake on top of the sheets with a film of sweat on his body for several hours.

The next morning they had breakfast and made the rounds of the gauging stations. They ate lunch in Yulee, and later ran a line from a high water mark of a recent flood stage. It was close to four when they got back to the Rainbow Courts. The afternoon was gray, stagnant and hot. Dorsey thought dismally of his room, and decided he could not go there. So he left the motel, and took a walk.

He strode absently through the two block business section, past the darkened dime stores, the fabric shop, the cafe, and then followed a narrow sidewalk along the boulevard. There was little traffic—only an occasional car or truck. Human beings, except for a man watering his garden, a woman shell-ing peas under the shade of an old oak tree, were strangely absent. Dorsey walked through the leaden afternoon, blank-minded, until he reached the small shopping center. There was little there to interest him. He went into a small drugstore. It was cool and quiet inside, faint with a pharmaceutical odor. He bought two books and several magazines from the supercilious saleslady who had eyed him from his entrance. Outside, he passed a group of old men on a bench. Their talk was listless and perfunctory. They looked bored. They stared at Dorsey as he walked by. A car drove by on the boulevard and its sound disappeared into the consuming solemnity of the afternoon. Nowhere was there a sound but the distant muffle of a jet high overhead—nothing but silence. Dorsey walked slowly. Never before had he felt so empty, so hopeless, and alone. He quickened his pace for the motel, anxious to see I.T. again. All along the way, like a troubled dream, tranquility lay heavily around him: the peaceful little front lawns, the ladies in chairs, the shade trees, the rose bushes, the birdbaths, the neat, trimmed edges of St. Augustine grass along the walkways. He yearned for the clamor of children—a softball game in a lot, a group of boys on bicycles. But there was nothing. He listened intently, but heard only echoes of silence come rolling across the shaded streets and peaceful yards.

* * * * *

They went to dinner at six-thirty. No sooner had they seated themselves in the little restaurant than they were approached by a young woman, about thirty, in a burgundy pants-suit. She was very large—six feet tall or more—full and broad-limbed. She had a mountain of blonde hair framing a very pretty face. Her eyes were blue and her smile was warm, and she came upon them energetically.

"I.T.! You rat!" she exclaimed, wrapping her arms around his chest from behind him, and smacking his cheek. "Where have you been so long?"

"Hello there darling," said I.T., turning in his chair. "What do you mean where have I been? I've been working and thinking about you, you lovely thing. Goodness gracious if I don't



Photo by Mark Willis

believe you've gotten *prettier*."

"Oh hush."

"Laddie—this is my new help, and the best one yet: Dorsey Dubose."

Dorsey nodded.

"How do you do, sugar?" Laddie said. "You're a sweet looking thing. Has I.T. been working you hard?"

"He's been trying to kill me," Dorsey said.

"I know it! Isn't he a mess?" Laddie said and turned to I.T. "Now I.T., you terrible thing, you be sweet to that boy, or me and him'll just go off and have a little party and talk about you." She winked at Dorsey.

"Just trying to get my money's worth out of him, darling."

"Lord, you're a mess. What ya'll gone have tonight? I can get you a nice thick steak or some nice pork chops or chicken and the catfish is fresh. And the squash is out of my garden."

"Oh goodness gracious if you ain't hit a weak spot darling. Let me have some of that. And some catfish and hush puppies and some hot sauce and iced tea. And I'm going to go over here and make a pig out of myself at this here salad bar."

"What about you, sugar?"

"Steak—rare—and fries. And I guess some squash."

"It's *good*, honey, picked this afternoon. Ya'll don't go away."

She bustled back to the kitchen, and Dorsey went and made his salad. Back at their table, as he ate, Dorsey watched Laddie moving tirelessly from table to table among the scattered diners, a convivial, attentive hostess. She passed their table at intervals, leaving some playful remark.

The steak was excellent, but Dorsey couldn't eat it all. Laddie tried to make him, but he had little appetite. "Mickey's gone eat it if you don't, sugar," she said. He said it was Mickey's lucky day. He was tired, and he was glad. He thought only of morning.

"Bright and early tomorrow, now," I.T. told him. "Breakfast at seven and we'll shove off, boys and girls."

"I'll be ready."

"You ain't got any plans tonight, have you?"

"Yeah—I was going to hit a few nightclubs, and check out the singles bars. Maybe catch a play."

I.T. laughed. "Sweet dreams."

* * * * *

The magazines laying discarded on the floor, his book abandoned on the dresser, Dorsey had just turned off the television and was about to get into bed, when the knock came. It was ten o'clock. Laddie had changed clothes. She had on a white blouse and blue jeans. She loomed in the doorway, smiling. "Hi," she said.

"Hi."

A moment passed. She raised an eyebrow and asked, "Can I come in?"

Dorsey didn't know what to do. He stared at her for a second, trying to think of an excuse—something, anything. He could think of nothing. "Well . . ."

"Just for a little bit," she said, "Whew! I've been on my feet

all day long—I'm wore out."

"Okay," Dorsey said, and she slipped in. He closed the door uneasily and they were alone with the hum of the air conditioner in the little room.

"Been reading?"

"Yeah."

"Good book?" She examined the paperback on the dresser.

Dorsey shrugged. "It's all right—murder mystery. I kind of like them."

"I don't read much myself," she said, looking at him with a smile. "I always wished I read more, but I just never got around to it." She stood comfortably beside the dresser.

"It's something to do," Dorsey said, and they were silent. "Oh, I'm sorry—sit down, please. I didn't expect any—visitors tonight."

She lowered herself into the armchair beside the bed. "But isn't it nice when they come unexpected sometimes?"

Her frank stare was flustering Dorsey enormously. "Yeah—sometimes." He sat on the edge of the bed.

She sighed and leaned back in the chair. "I tell you what—this heat is something isn't it?"

"It's terrible," Dorsey agreed.

"Some afternoons I feel like I'm just gonna pass out."

"Yeah, it's hot."

"Oh me," Laddie sighed.

Dorsey's heart was racing. His face was flushed; his blood pulsed in his arms and neck. Inside his mind a tumult of wild thoughts flickered chaotically. His breath was short—he felt he wouldn't be able to talk. He wished she would vanish. Why else would she be here? he thought. What possible reason? There was none. Maybe I'm just imagining it—maybe it's nothing. But that is crazy. He had no idea whatever what to do. He sat trying to control the quaking in his body, growing more and more angry with himself, more ashamed of his nervousness. Laddie watched him with a slight smile on her lips, staring into his eyes calmly. He felt enraged at her—he felt like a fool—and he looked at the wall, the floor, the door, but always his gaze was drawn back to her: her white neck stretched back as she reclined comfortably in the chair, under the soft light of the lamp.

"I.T. said you're from Tennessee."

"Yes."

"How did you get up with him?"

"I don't know—I just got this job."

"Oh—you must like Florida."

"It's okay."

"And you just came down here—struck out on your own."

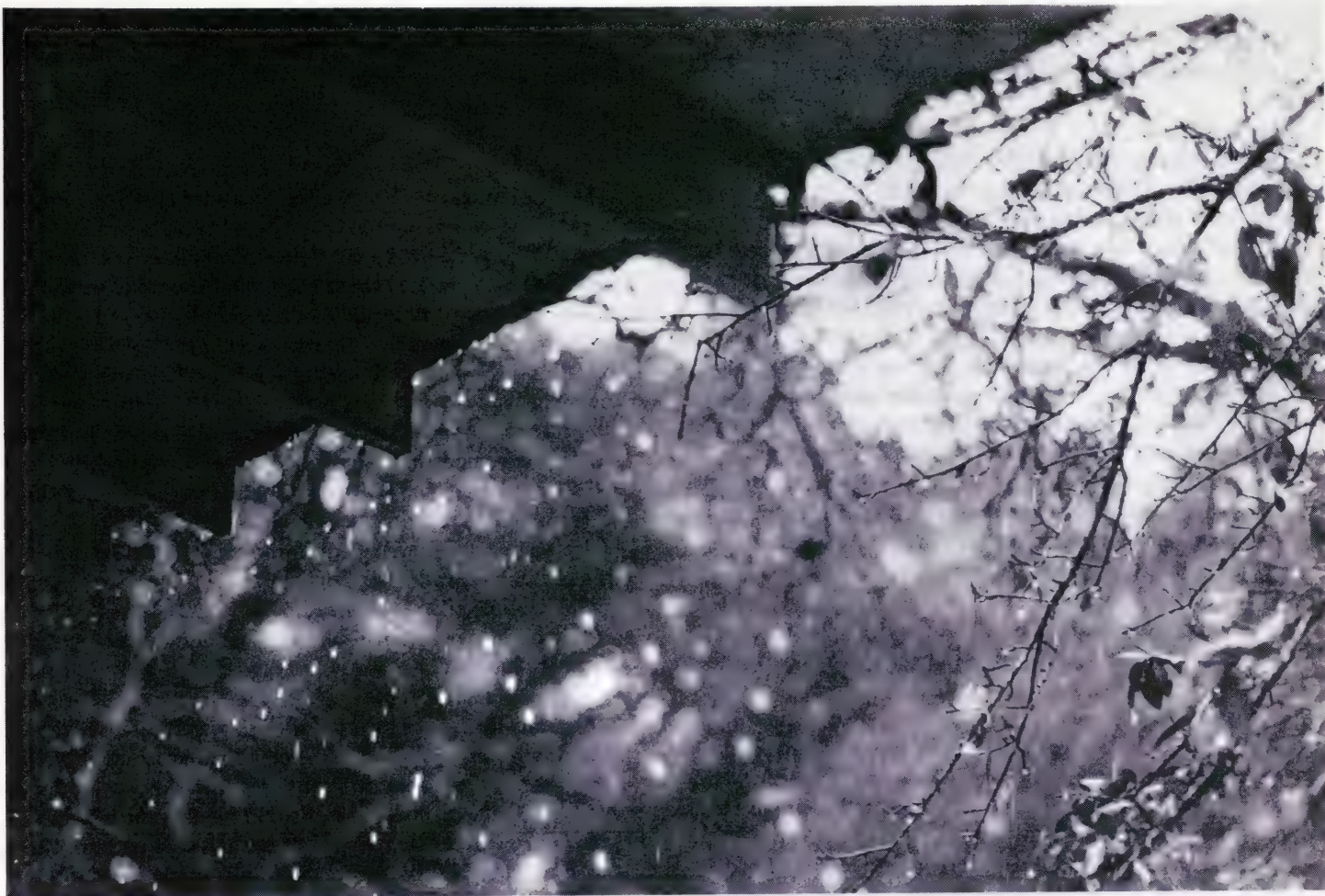
"Uh-yes, sort of."

"Well I think that's really good. I think young people ought to get out on their own before they get all settled down." She laughed shortly. "Me—I'm not so crazy about Florida. I guess I've been living here too long."

"Maybe you ought to move somewhere else."

She laughed again. "Well, I just might do that one day. Just pick up and go to—Tennessee! They'd wonder what happened if they woke up one morning and I was gone!"

Dorsey smiled, devoid of an answer. They were silent again for a spell.



"You sure are cute," Laddie finally said. "How many girlfriends you got?"

Dorsey felt his face burning, and he spat like a caged cat inside himself at his embarrassment, bewilderment, and shame. "None."

"Not *one*?"

"No—I . . ."

"Well I don't blame you. They're just a lot of trouble—women. I know. They just drive all the men crazy, don't they? And then act so sweet sometimes. I know."

"Yeah."

"Well, I don't have any boyfriends either," Laddie went on. "They're too much fuss to keep em happy."

"Well . . ."

"Yes they are too. Most of them. I'm divorced you know."

"Uh no—I'm sorry."

"Oh don't be sugar. I'm not." She laughed. "I lived with him six years. That was long enough."

Dorsey mumbled some awkward reply, and fell dumb, unable to think of even a word or phrase to utter. He ransacked his brain. They had only one thing in common. "Did you see I.T.?" he asked.

Laddie glanced at him before answering. "You mean tonight? No."

"Oh, You acted like you were old friends."

"Well we are. That old snake. How do you put up with him?"

"I don't know—I get kind of a kick out of him."

"Oh yeah, I do too," Laddie responded.

Dorsey wanted to know if I.T. had sent her. He was sure that he had. But he didn't know how to ask. A moment passed.

"I don't get to meet interesting young men like you every day," Laddie said. "I guess I owe you an apology for barging in like this. I just get lonesome sometimes."

Something fell inside Dorsey. I have been imagining it all, he screamed at himself. What a *fool*. What am I supposed to do—talk to her like anybody else? Like she was just a regular person? Disappointment welled up in him, and when he recognized it, he was surprised. He was totally confused.

"You want some wine, Dorsey?"

Dorsey looked at her. She sat up in her chair and pulled her large purse out in front of her.

"Wine?"

"Yes, sugar." She produced a bottle and a corkscrew. "I thought you might want a snort—you got to go across the river to buy it."

"I'd love some," Dorsey said. The gesture affected him. He smiled. "I really appreciate it."

"It's my pleasure," Laddie said.

Photo by Mark Willis

She opened the bottle. Dorsey fetched two glasses, and she poured them both half full.

The bottle went steadily down. By eleven it was empty and Dorsey was in better command of himself. Laddie had moved to the bed, beside him, and her eyes were a little glazed. She laughed a great deal.

Dorsey later remembered the extreme awkwardness of the first few moments. She was so big. Her body produced in him a mixture of fear and excitement. Everything was strange to him—but not so strange. It was all entirely different—but not different. He exhausted himself upon her. But when he with her, she had not done with him. She was beyond controlling herself. The well of passion, desire, pleasure, whatever, within her was deeper, clearer than Dorsey could have imagined, and it surprised and inspired him. He forgot her size—he forgot everything. They were both exhausted, and both fell soon into a deep sleep.

* * * * *

Dorsey woke instantly with the ringing of the phone. It was six-thirty, the voice said. Laddie murmured softly and moved around under the covers, but did not awaken. Making little noise, Dorsey showered and dressed and packed his suitcase. He looked at the body in the bed, the blonde hair just showing on the pillow. He was surprised that there was no change anywhere. The empty wine bottle stood on the table. All was the same. He felt the same, except for a sensation of triumph and guilt. He took a last look around the room, and relieved in knowing he would never return there, stepped out into the cool morning. He put his suitcases on the truck and headed for the restaurant.

The morning was clear, and warmed with promise. The beauty, the newness were not lost on Dorsey; they were indeed all the more poignant for the familiar longing that swept over him. Something was falling behind him—something he loved dearly but could not keep. It flowed away, not to stand behind, separate, but back into the unhurried current, as though a fabulous creation of a bright-eyed boy had reared itself momentarily from the river, waved its arms, danced in joy, looked with pride upon the world, and settled back into the depths, never to come again.

Dorsey dreaded what he knew would be I.T.'s flippant, casual air. He dreaded the goading, the teasing that he knew would come. But he was mistaken. I.T. made no reference to Laddie at all.

He was sitting at a table, reading the paper.

"Good morning," Dorsey said.

I.T. looked up. "Good morning girls. Beautiful day in Chicago."

"Beautiful," Dorsey agreed.

A waitress appeared. "You want some coffee?"

"Yes, please."

I.T. resumed reading and Dorsey sat looking out the window where the morning sun gleamed along the edges of the steel bridge, creating a glowing arc. The river, in shadows, flowed slowly along. Dorsey was resolved. But nothing ends, nothing begins, he thought. It is all the same. What an undistinguished, vanishing moment this is. And it will always be the same—this

Vamp

Lugosi's lass,
a red-peaked daughter
Wearing little but lace,
yet always cloaked in womanly shadow.
I long to enter your dark castle,
and feel your lust-sharpened teeth on my neck.
But all you do is drive stakes
through my heart.

Rick Harmon

very sun, this air, this hunger, this smell of coffee. And this yearning that settles on the spirit in late summer, this memory of cool afternoons and changing winds, the smell of leaves burning, flocks of blackbirds settling like a wave on fields—it will always be just this way. For an instant, Dorsey felt an insupportable weight upon him: the bottomlessness of the past, his happiness, his hope, his wonderful and soaring talents and abilities, his determination, his honesty, his sincerity, all the rich and fabulous beauty of the world; they cloyed like syrup too rich, too sweet.

"This will be my last trip, I.T.," he said.

I.T. lowered his paper and regarded Dorsey. He said none of the things he might have. "Well, I can't say I blame you. I never did think you were destined to be another I.T."

"What about Colorado?—I guess I ought to just forget about that, huh?"

I.T. screwed up his lips and met Dorsey's stare for a moment. "It just ain't in the Big Picture." He sighed, and hesitated. "You ought to have known better than to count on me. I told you." He paused again. "I'm sorry I got your hopes all up—I didn't mean for you to. I sincerely didn't. Just leave old folks like me be. Don't let em hold you up. Just go on around em." He looked at Dorsey with a brief smile. "I could give you Wiley's address. Give him a call for you."

Dorsey looked at him. "Okay, Maybe so."

I.T. shrugged. "If you want me to."

"You ought to be going with me," Dorsey said with a deep sense of relief at the impossibility of such an idea. "But I guess that's just the way it goes. Just tell me one thing: why am I not disgusted with you? Nauseated?"

I.T. grinned. "It's just so easy to forget what a snake I am."

The waitress returned with Dorsey's coffee, and asked for their orders.

Dorsey wanted only toast.

"Let's see, sugar," I.T. said for his part. "Bring me two ostrich eggs, over-easy, three slices of crisp bacon, two biscuits, grits, butter, salt, pepper, orange juice, coffee, cream and sugar, and a great big beautiful smile from you darling."

The girl obliged him shyly and hurried off.

The sun was a little higher. The gleam had left the bridge. Outside, a bread truck pulled up to the building, and a young man hopped out briskly. I.T. resumed his paper.

"Lovely, lovely day in Chicago," he said.



Second Place , Sigma Tau Delta Poetry Contest

Party Jokes and Prayers

Looking out through
Stained glass windows and cataracts
The old man examines
His reflection in the masked speaker.
(for the first time)

It isn't October
But new born ears (of sixty years)
Hear ghostly promises
Emerging through Jack-o-lantern grins

Something like this--

"Repent for ten percent

Ye lovers of the moon

You've got to pay the rent

Great Pumpkin's coming soon."

The old man gets his pen

And writes a message

On the bulletin.

It goes like this--

"Trust your feelings to your thoughts

Living is a solo waltz

Glide while those around you spin

No one put you here to win."

He is the church Poet-in-decadence.

Sam Morgan

Running
with silent
desperation
seeking only a
smile
from an
unforgotten
lover.

Kathy Hartsell

Third Place , Sigma Tau Delta Poetry Contest

I've been replacing my veins
With electrical wirings,
To carry that volt a bit quicker
From the brain and to the legs.

I'm becoming transistorized
To that electrostatic, tingling flow
And looking for that intensive shock
To wake my mind to consciousness.

I've been searching
Through my coils and vacuum tubes,
For that perfect socket
To Plug Into.

Chuck Measel

so cold and clear at three a.m.
in the darkness much lighter tonight
stars sparkle through the bending pines
as if signals to somewhere
and i can only wonder
am i becoming as close to her
as my next breath?
i think she's teaching me
how to levitate in the psalm of her hand:
am i ready for such a height?
unbound by the gravity of any situation,
i am free to fall
much deeper into space
where dreams of constellations
resemble this image of her face

A.J. Wright

Immutable Mutability

Through another long, bitter winter I struggled almost futilely to maintain faith against a wild compulsive apprehension that God, not without reason, had abandoned the earth and his children to the frigid fury of the merciless elements. Then, finally, spring burst suddenly to rebuke quivering belief with a profusion of colorful splendor unparalleled in my memory. The season of renewal lingered as a long dispensation for repentance and reaffirmation, and for a time our hearts knew the joy of hope fulfilled.

Like carefree children we surrendered to the beauty of the moment until the variegated flowers faded into the soft green that foretells the advent of Southern summer. Then slowly events beyond the local horizon filtered back into our field of vision with disquieting effect. Tremors of the powderkeg explosion on the Horn of Africa remained, the tinderbox quivered and shattered in Israel and Lebanon, and Aldo Moro's long ordeal intensified relentlessly.

The days flew swiftly, the temperature climbed gradually, Aldo Moro's catastrophe fell suddenly, the tragedies of Kolwezi and then Orly burst upon us, the temperature reached ninety, and my heart was troubled sorely. I took refuge in the deep cool green woodlands and sought an

appropriate word, a fresh proverb for this terrifying era of destructive discord and found nothing but faint echoes from ancient oracles. Forsaking the foolish quest of a heart too proud, I returned to the legacy of the masters and the holy writ through which I searched madly and vainly for an old banner to raise in a new crusade.

Frustrated, I retreated again to the isolation of the forest to petition a revelation, a divine mission, and reconciliation. I paced dim old pathways restlessly and fruitlessly until perspiration flowed freely, and the world darkened under the threat of an impending storm. The lightning flashed, the thunder rumbled, and the rain cascaded through trees swaying to the cadence of the wind and my tumultuous heart.

As suddenly as it came, the storm abated, the sky cleared, and the sun shone gently on the straight and silent trees through which a cool breeze stole quietly. I surrendered to the deep peacefulness of that little corner of the earth and yielded the resolution of mighty conflicts to some source with more adequate power and wisdom. And then I heard through the voice of the Psalmist the message I had previously sought in vain: *Be still and know that I am God.*

Jack Mountain

CONTRIBUTORS

Dr. Robert Andelson, a faculty member of the **Circle** editorial board, is a professor of philosophy and the author of a book, **Imputed Rights**. He serves on the editorial boards of **The Personality**, an international journal of philosophy, and **The Journal of Economics and Sociology** and is listed in *Who's Who in America*.

Leslie Blackmon, **Circle** assistant editor and dubbed "Miss Washingtonian," is a junior majoring in English. Back from a recent stint in our nation's capitol, Leslie is typically a girl with her feet in Auburn and her heart in Washington.

Betsy Butgereit, a favorite at Ralph Brown Draughon, is a junior majoring in journalism. She will combine her journalistic and leadership skills as next year's managing editor of the **Plainsman**.

John Carvalho, **Plainsman** editor, will graduate this quarter in journalism. John will work for the Associated Press this summer before emerging on the cruel, cruel world.

Dennas Davis, the **Circle's** art director, is a sophomore majoring in visual art. Dennas has still not been persuaded to abandon school work in lieu of his activities with the **Circle**, much to the dismay of editorial board members majoring in extra-curricular.

Jimmy Grimes, a senior majoring in journalism, is a correspondent for the **Opelika-Auburn News**. His prize-winning short story in the recent Sigma Tau Delta contest is featured in this issue of the **Circle**.

Rick Harmon, is the managing editor of the **Plainsman** and fancies himself a "latter day Casanova." Harmon adds his journalistic abilities with his article on cinemas and offers the **Circle** several lewd poems.

Fred Donovan Hill is a former teacher at UAB and is currently a graduate student in adult education. He demonstrated both his tremendous skills in poetry and prose in this issue.

Jeanne Holland, a senior in journalism, will leave for Africa as a member of the Peace Corps upon

her graduation. She makes her debut in the **Circle** this quarter with a surprising short story.

Madison Jones, Auburn Alumni Writer-in-Residence, and a member of the **Circle's** editorial board, published his sixth novel this quarter. Called **Passage Through Gehenna**, it is the first novel ever published by LSU Press. He has sold movie rights to two books; **An Exile** (made into the film **I Walk the Line**) and **A Cry of Absence** which made the front page of the **New York Times Book Review**.

Wanda Kenton, a member of the editorial board, uses her journalistic talents and abundant energies for work not only with the **Circle**, **Plainsman**, and **Glom**, but also as editor of the **Tiger Cub**.

James Locke, editorial board member gained acclaim as vice-president of the Council of International Relations and United Nations Affairs who was mugged on their recent pilgrimage to the Big Apple. When he is not philosophizing about life, he is making vain attempts at movie stardom.

Linda Lewis, a sophomore whose writing ability and ravishing good looks should lead to an outstanding career in journalism, makes her **Circle** debut this quarter. Linda will work for the **Dothan Progress** this summer.

Mickey Logue, editorial board member and journalism professor, was on the staffs of the **Atlanta Constitution**, **Montgomery Advertiser**, and **Birmingham News** before coming to Auburn. In 1975 he served as visiting assistant editor of the prestigious **Chronicle of Higher Education**.

Pat O'Connor, who graduates in journalism this quarter, starts law school in the fall at the University of Georgia. Pat demonstrates both reporting and writing ability with two contributions to the magazine.

Jim Patton, ex-football player and senior majoring in journalism, gives the **Circle** a look at a little known fact of a former Alabama governor's private life.

Mala Paulk, the quite daring young authoress, is a student editorial board member. Her many hours of service include writing

most of these biographical synopses.

David Petrizzi, program director of **WEGL**, is a senior majoring in speech communications. His second short story along with more of his poetry is featured in this issue of the **Circle**, establishing David as one of Auburn's best known young writers.

Jerry Roden, Jr., an ex-officio faculty member of the **Circle** editorial board, was editor of **The Auburn Alumnews** from 1957 to 1965. He is still busily planning the publication of a new magazine.

Jackie Romine, ex-features editor of the **Plainsman**, works for the **Auburn Bulletin**. She is anticipating a wedding early this summer, but takes time out from her matrimony plans for a special **Circle** article.

Sharon Stacey, editorial board member, will graduate this quarter in accounting. She is receiving the President's Award for the School of Business.

Dee Voyles, a graduate student in math education, is a member of the editorial board. She will most likely have given birth to her first child by the time she reads this index.

Charlotte Ward, an associate professor in physics, is a faculty member of the **Circle** editorial board. She contributes to various scientific journals and has written a physical science textbook for college students, **This Blue Planet**.

Dave White, entertainment editor of the **Plainsman**, will be news editor next year. A senior in journalism, Dave will complete a physics degree also.

Johnny Williams, currently in Europe, was winner of the Sigma Tau Delta short story contest. A graduate student, Johnny has been a faithful contributor to the **Circle** for a number of years.

Mark Winne, the illustrious editor-in-chief of the **Circle**, is noted about campus for his timidity (ha!) particularly in matters relating to the student government. Feeling his wit comparable to that of Mel Brooks and Peter Sellers, Mark still finds his most comfortable place atop his soapbox.